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The
DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

MODERN ISMS

ABOUT every several decades down the centuries ambitious youngsters have departed from the traditions of their sedater seniors to the championing of new ideas, cults, movements. About every several decades so-called new schools and dictums are foisted upon long-suffering humanity.

Turning back to the Eighteen-nineties in art and letters one detects this spirit in perhaps its intensest manifestation. Victorianism was grown tedious. Something had to be done to dispel monotony. Readers of books and dilettanti yawned out of sheer ennui or went back to the Elizabethans and Restorationists for meaty victuals. Young men, taking notice, scratched heads and thought, or tried to think. It was time to start something new, to break away. Coteries were formed, magazines launched —*The Yellow Book, The Savoy, The Hobby Horse.* The Rhymers' and various other special clubs came into being. Wilde in his lily bed took down Beauty from her shelf, polished her off, dressed her to his liking and exhibited the result to a gaping audience. Beardsley with facile pencil perverted her image to his phthisic fancies. Henley declaimed her to his taste from the clinics of hospitals; Dowson, Thompson and Symons from brothel, gutter and dance-hall. Dame Beauty was become "modernized," made new to the particular conceit of each of her particular renovators.

So it was, so it is, so will it ever be. About every several decades Beauty is dragged off the shelf and refurbished for the edification of humanity and the comprehension of the selecter six. But for the most part she is mutilated beyond recognition. And always you are aware that Keats must have been wrong when he synonymized her with Truth. For where Truth is nowadays, Beauty isn't, and where Beauty is, *Veritas non est.* Innumerable cohorts of Ists and Isms have routed her back to her sanctuaries in ancient Greece, Rome, Athens, legendary France and doughty England of the old days.

What I am trying to point is that newness remains quite negligible. Beauty as ever is all that counts, or Truth, as you please. The modern Isms of today become the antiquations of tomorrow. Several decades hence such writers as James Joyce, Wyndham Lewis, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot and our Waldo Frank will have been either entirely forgotten or recalled only as eccentric clowns who cavorted before a one-ring audience of other such eccentric clowns.

Read or try to read "Rahab," Waldo Frank's latest, and see what I mean. Here is tall fustian—pompous, tiresome, banal. Fustian shorn even of cleverness. The whole book seems a pitiful attempt to be smart, different. Why try always to be different? This is the weakness of present-day modern Isms. Why not try to write as one talks or as

one is? My friend, the distinguished fictioneer-moralist, a militant modern, gives out that the first law in life as well as in letters is to accept one's self. I quite agree with him. Accept yourself, discover yourself, your true individuality, your true metier and then paint, orate, sell or manufacture linens, linoleums, mattresses or novels as you prefer.

At random I take another book "The Beautiful and Damned" by Scott Fitzgerald, the "flapper-philosopher," cried perpetrator of "This Side of Paradise." I plough dutifully through the first one hundred and fifty, getting tireder and boreder as the ploughing progresses. Here is the inevitable flapper (the devil take her) and her consort the male nonenity (of whom the devil will have none). Here is marriage, money and morons to your appetite's satiety. Here is gloom unconfined, dressed in "modern" lingo by "modern" dummies, done as we are told by a "modern" young man lately come up from Rutgers or some such institution.

And did you read "If Winter Comes?" And did you read "Dada's Darling"? And did you read this? or that? by this or that protagonist of the new gospel. Speaking of Dada, not to be disrespectful to the infant, one yet wonders why the brat was weaned again. However Dadaism is not without significance. At any rate we have here a naive effort to get down to root, which, however ridiculous the means, is effort in the right direction.

But the difficulty with the whole outfit, pack and parcel, seems to be a woeful lack of the sense of values. Values are eternal. Truth is truth. Art is art. And so on. Of what avail is it that I strip naked, paint belly blue, wear a ring in my nose, go out into the streets and dance a Hottentot shimmy to prove that I am not of the common herd when at heart I know I am? Why the spectacle? Does it impress anyone? Does it get me anywhere? Does it make me happier? If so well and good; if not, well?

Values are eternal. The old reminder. New gospels, new schools, new movements come and go. Every several decades the boys break away, start something different, but values — beauty, truth, humor, craftmanship — remain. And there is mirth on Olympus.

SOLEMN SPEED DEMONS

AFTER reading the novels of the so-called younger or advanced school of American letters I become more fixed than ever in my conviction that solemnity is an ineradicable trait of the native mind. As a people we seem incapable of taking things other than ponderously. The old school of sentiment in lavendar has been scoffed out of existence since many years, only it would seem to be superseded by a band of heavy handed soddenlimbed enthusiasts for gaiety and the joy of living. It is a case for chuckles when serious minded college graduates, psuedo-Rabelaisians with a touch of dyspepsia and victims of the elevated trains and force fed restaurants whoop hysterically for love and license.

Somehow or other we always miss the graceful Latins' sweet reasonableness. We go from whiskey to coco-cola back to white lightning. We go from chemically pure virgins to bob-haired sex-

driven nymphomaniacs in our fictional, which is to say our vital, ideal.

The trouble is that we who are sufferers from over wrought nerves and motor mania do not know how to establish a sane cultural background. Instead of crying for more liberty, more license, stronger whiskey and faster machines we should examine more searchingly into what life really is. Life means first of all, it seems to me, good things to eat and an honest enjoyment of them. It does not mean smothering the taste of inferior meats impartially cooked in catsup and Chile sauce, nor does it mean gorging oneself on sweets till the palate refuses. I recall the astonishment of a little French girl at seeing me devour a cake of milk chocolate in four minutes. She assured me that that cake would have lasted her six days. Secondly life should mean a knowledge of how to make love. And yet any refinement of the primitive animal impulse and gratification of it is regarded in America as degenerate. Do we understand anything about upholstery other than we learn from the advertisements in the million a week magazines. What about the furnishings of our homes? Are they not cheap pretentious copies of something seen or read about in the homes of the more well to do, and turned out like Fords from the Grand Rapids factories—"Yessir, three hundred Chippendale tables a day is the capacity of this gang of men, and I hope by the use of an improved machine just patented by a fellow in Detroit to run my Chippendale output up to five hundred."

We have miniature facsimiles in stucco of the chateaus of France and the great houses of Europe, only they front directly on the sidewalk and your window has a good view of your neighbor's tin garage. Always you see pretense, mereticiousness, imitation, a straining after effect and that effect, failing as it always does, is dull, stupid, absurd. In a word we are pompous and solemn because we are dishonest with ourselves. Sanity which is only a synonym for culture must be reared on an acceptance of life as it actually is, not as it is represented to be lived by those ridiculous actors who move around in the homes of California profiteers in cinematographic fables. It goes without saying that a sound art and a sound literature cannot precede a sane form of living. Furious striving for effect, swifter and ever swifter moving vehicles, stronger stimulants nor pathologically promiscuous cohabitation can bring these. Solemnity goes when saneness enters, and gaiety is the triumphant song of the self possessed Evoe!

THE VULGAR OPINION

IN the vulgar opinion there is no room for heresy, but the wise man's intelligence embraces not only the Trinity and the most holy relics of San Griffone but also all the demons, devils and goblins of the Christian and heathen worlds and the fabulous wisdom of antiquity. The intelligent observer admits everything and denies nothing. The manner in which the Holy Spirit operated the levitation of saints is a trifle obscure, but so is the nature of being.

The vulgar observer knows Truth when he sees it, but so clever and urbane a rogue as Pontius Pilate admitted that he searched for his stars on

a misty night and found none. Your sage is not likely to wager you many pennies on the law of gravitation, sturdy as it appears: neither will he deny that milk and blood fell from heaven during the consulship of M. Acilius Balba. These problems are very subtle. The vulgar observer usually succeeds in solving them by formula (for he is always equipped with some yokel's touchstone) but the thinking animal, knowing so many formulas, all so apt, adventures perpetually in the rich labyrinths of uncertainty.

As it happens, these are grave days for yokels. The world has lost its standards, as they say in the street, and the vulgar know not what to cling to. In life, art, letters, religion and morality, the standards are blown to the winds. All that heretofore has been fixed as stone is now as volatile as gas. Seeing his formulas fade away before his very nose the vulgar observer cannot decide (something which to him is very essential) what Truth is. He and his prophets are distressed. Their worlds are in a fluster. They are afraid.

But your thinking animal, your wisehead, is little disturbed by these revolutions and upheavals in art and letters and life, serenely calm in the realization that he remains as great an ass as ever and that the loss of standards has neither increased nor diminished to any appreciable degree his adamantine uncertainty. He knows nothing, admits everything, and, though he may at times envy the Abbot of Hildesheim who was lucky enough to overhear a dispute between a poltergeist and a vampire which proved the existence of God, is generally happy enough.

TEN CENT OPERA

FROM a current journal I learn that Thomas Edison says, "The day will come when we can have grand opera for a dime." Forthwith I stick that in my card index of special irritations.

Indeed, I think, the day may come, but who are you going to get to go to the show?

As the matter stands, the opera is a spectacle of splendor; a fancy concoction not to be had for a dime. For one dime, ten cents, two jitneys, ladies and gents, you *can't* see a couple of thousand hard white shirts, bare feminine torsos, pearl necklaces, and spirit tinted noses, except, possibly, through the kitchen keyhole of a Palm Beach pub. Remove the foregoing from the opry house and you have left—on a clear night: About one hundred mammals, half of them foreigners, and the other fifty per cent, tired-eyed commuters, schoolteachers, snare-drumers on leave from the neighboring cinema palace and six or eight young ladies doing time in the conservatory. With these five score in the bleachers and the loges cold and bare, where does the management come in?

No, Thomas, you've got the wrong slant on the boys and girls. It can't be done. You must hand them something worse than opera for a dime. The truth is they can't conceive that opera, or anything else—bull fights, movie terrors, slugging matches, leg shows, can be much at that price.

No, Tom, if you're thinking of letting us Americans in on the great cause of Art, try the other end of the cash regis-

ter. Let the present two figure tariff for Galli-Curci be. Go further. Install box offices in the museums and the picture galleries (with speculators down the alley); stick the crowd a dollar and a half a head for each day they take Cabell or Willa Cather out of the public library, and I'll wager you a brand new Madza you'll make Art a popular success.

SEX STUFF

CANDIDLY, I'm no sex-hound. Pornographia, curiosa, erotica, as such, make no distinct appeal to me. Victoria Cross, Elinor Glyn and the "compleat tri-anglers" I leave to the nosy sisterhood. Whereas heavies like Freud, Krafft-Ebing and Edward Carpenter seem much too solemn to be regarded seriously. Havelock Ellis and D. H. Lawrence are not without certain mutton. George Moore? well, George is precious, in the technical sense of the word. And Remy de Gourmont? simply a Frenchman. Schnitzler? a German. Sherwood Anderson? a moralist. And so on . . .. But, heigho (stifling a yawn) life being at best a shoddy business and sex a shoddier, why walk the dog?

Why not wax excited over the motivating results that Croton oil has upon one's say reflex, complex or sub-conscious, as you please. Certainly Croton, Epsom, or the sung-of C. C. C.'s, as any ex-servicer will tell you, are quite as important in their influence upon one function as the inhibitory rumblings of Sylvan and Celeste upon the other. And who shall say, weighed in balance, which function of the two is the more significant?

Now, my aesthetic friend, don't turn away in disgust. No offense intended. I am talking quite frankly, you know, and in deadly earnest. This sex stuff as it is done up today in all its cloying, and be it ever so mild aromaed, toxic regalia, has become a pestilential nuisance. It is rank, mephitic. It is foul with the foulness of old women's breaths. Scurrilous, tawdry, cheap, (inept qualifications) the crippled bastard of senility, this cerebral spawn of the nympholept has become—well, well, I too grow vehement.

The senile mind alone is responsible for the muck. I am no prude, God knows. Ho, for the great broads—Boccacio, Rabelais, Marmontel, Swift, Balzac. Ho, for wit, wassail and stout humor, but for the sake of good old-fashioned gusto and lustihood, this same febrile malodorous glucose, which has so insinuated itself upon stage and screen and into books and periodicals in devious ways and under innumerable guises all over America and Europe, now grown a menace, an insult to intelligence, should be removed in the manner such menaces are usually removed—smoked out.

Strike fire, scriveners, smoke out the stuff. If the dear people want sex, give the dear people sex. But not by suggestion, innuendo, varnishment. Give them sex stark, unadorned, ugly, *vide* the Restorationists, the Russians, Zola. Or sex from all its grotesque facets, *vide* Juvenal, Villon, Rabelais. Or make out of it, in the manner of the ancients, a ritual. Idealize it, idolize it, if you must. Surely phallic worship and Lesbianism are preferable to prurient

strench given out by polite panderers of sugarcoated pornographia. Yes, lay on the fagots, build fire, give the dear people sex, but do so quite simply, sans fear, sans shame, sans suggestion. Quite freely, quite boldly denude the beast. For me? well, I should rather run than read.

THE AWKWARD REBEL

OUR revolutionists in art and letters, sickened by the slow poison of convention, run the same risk as Commodus Verus, who killed himself by taking an antidote.

It may be quite true, and I am not one to deny it, that the trite and conventional stigmata are death to productions of art. But it is doubtless equally true that the production whose only distinction is that it is unconventional or that it is not trite is as dead as its opposite. One does not necessarily arrive at art in letters by writing of gilded goshawks or shrouded desires nor does one arrive at it simply by avoiding all mention of verdant pastures, gentle breezes and simple bucolic love. One does not produce necessarily a thing of beauty by enumerating rare emotions or unusual transactions, however arresting they may be, nor by cataloguing strange virtues or strange sins.

The rebel does not escape from the necessity of good writing by choosing new subject matter or embracing new forms. Man is old. He has dabbled in art and letters for a long while. He has passed through numerous civilizations, numerous moralities. His art and his literature have mirrored all the changing shades of his dreams, all the subtle gradations of his emotions (including all perversions) and nearly anything that this ape may do at the present time he has already done now and then in the past, leaving a fairly accurate record. Man has weathered a thousand moralities, a thousand *moeurs*. His literature has registered them.

But, in casting our eye over the world's literature, we discover, despite the varicolored welter of manners and customs, moralities and fetiches, dreams and images, rectitudes and perversions which are mirrored in this literature, good writing—the art of letters—remains very much the same throughout. It was the same sort of affair with the Chaldeans as it is with us, this art of language. The art of expression remains, through all vicissitudes, the same—chaste, aloof, rather immortal, undisturbed and unaffected by the variations in the raw material out of which it is spun.

The revolutionists too often go down to their doom believing that the raw material will suffice. Charmed by the novelty of an emotion, they feel that to point at it or to name it is to produce a thing of beauty. But they deceive themselves. Mention a perversion and you startle a Baptist, but this was a very old tune even to the Phoenicians and it is news only on Main Street. However startling one's theme, one is still faced with the bitter necessity of good writing. And writing well is the same difficult technical operation whether one discusses the subtleties of sex or holy living and holy dying.

There is a flood of clever and perhaps (for this particular Wednesday) startling printed matter being released around us. Men and women write of

long-hidden desires, so-called new emotions and yearnings with an unusual frankness. They write in new forms. But as I read their books I feel a vague distress. I ask for beauty and they bring me a clinical report on emotions or sensations, or a gospel of some sort. I ask for wine and they bring me empty goblets in new shapes.

THE MOST POPULAR MUSE

IF financial reward be any criterion, music takes with the peepul beyond any esthete's most exacting demands. Painters may bewail the fact that pictorial art is not in demand among stevedores, mill owners, and undertakers. Lyric poets may shed bitter tears because caramel consumers in short skirts do not purchase their volumes. And theatre magnates are always lamenting that art is not taken seriously, "that there ain't no money in high-brow stuff." Let them sob; Calliope should worry. She draws the crowds and the dollars.

The other night, by accident, I was drawn into one of those "concerts" which when assembled looks more like the last Republican convention at Chicago. If I said that this was a popular concert I should be offending the subscribers. It was heavy stuff that they were being handed, Tchaikowsky, Bach, Brahms and the balance. They had paid for the dreariest and they were going to get it, be it ever so painful. You have seen the performance yourself whether you live in Lemon City, Florida, or Saginaw, Michigan. About twenty-five hundred people sit ponderously in hard chairs breathing each other's carbon dioxide, their eyes glued on the conductor of the "symphony" orchestra or the "world renowned" violinist, and they dare you to talk. At the close of each number they slap their palms together vigorously. The game seems to be a question of who can first start clapping. But alas for those unfortunates who "beat the gun," that is, applaud before the selection is really over, they are hissed into silence and shame by those lucky enough "to know better."

In this assembly I do not think that it would be over stating the case to say that there are twenty music lovers. Of the balance ten percent honestly fall asleep overcome by bad air and ennui. The remaining ninety futilely peruse the program for the termination of the agony, wondering whether to describe the show as an "inferior performance", or, as "the most wonderful evening I ever experienced."

And so it goes. What the meaning of this mysterious mass movement is I leave to sociology and the Freudians. I have often vaguely wondered as no doubt must wonder the fat ladies and long-haired gentlemen who buy Pierce Arrows and private yachts out of the proceeds. Some day the tide will turn, perhaps, to museums; or barbers may throng the public libraries clamoring for the books of Walter Pater. Meanwhile, as I have said, Calliope should worry.

It is wanton waste to feed a tortoise with barley.—*Proverb.*

Quintilian: A Ballad

By EDMUND WILSON, Jr.

I. Quintilian walked on the Quirinal;
  Rome was crashing to decay;
The tilted shadows of the cypress
  Notched the Appian Way.
Quintilian, in mild elation,
Pondered a peroration.

II. Quintilian walked among the quince buds,
  Roman order collapsed;
The catacombs beneath his tread
  Hid churches crudely apsed.
Quintilian, in a tempered glee,
Plotted a shrewd peripety.

III. Quintilian enjoyed the quince buds,
  (Which he couldn't distinguish from peach);
He was brooding on asyndeton, astyanax
  And other figures of speech.
Nero and his sycophants
Were violating their uncles and aunts.

IV. Quintilian mused on a ruined quern;
  The barbarians gathered like thunder;
Nobody came to warn Quintilian
  To stand out from under.
The skies with triple bolts were torn
And calves with fifteen feet were born.

V. The waters drove; the dyke burst;
  Quintilian was crushed like a quince—
Leaving nothing but his immortal works,
  Which nobody has read since.
At least, neither I nor Dr. Bishop has yet,
Nor has anybody else in our set.

VI. All things, alas! like shadows fly;
  Quintilian, Nero, Rome,
Quince buds, asyndeton and I
  To dust and ash must come.
Yet suns still shine and quince buds bloom again
To light the loves and lives of other men.

Lafcadio Hearn In New Orleans

I. ON THE ITEM

By JOHN S. KENDALL

THERE was something in Lafcadio Hearn's life as romantic as in his books." This is the conclusion of Paul Elmer More, in one of the Shelbourne Essays, where he discusses Hearn's work as an interpreter of the East to the West. Had the critic concerned himself with Hearn's life in New Orleans, he would have discovered further and perhaps more certain ground for his statement. The ten years, from 1878 to 1887, which Hearn spent in New Orleans were crucial years, when he was feeling his way towards the forms of expression of which he was subsequently an acknowledged master; years of bitter struggle with poverty, but filled with important friendships; of tastes matured by a singularly congenial environment; of his first literary triumphs, and the beginninging of a remarkable career.

When Hearn went to Japan, he was a mature artist; the East had nothing to teach him except its philosophy, and that, in some of its most essential phases, he had already intuitively grasped; but if we are to trace the genesis of his extraordinary talent, it is to the days of travail on the *New Orleans Item* and *Times-Democrat*, to his residence in the French Quarter, among the Spanish and "meztizos" in the poorer part of the Crescent City; to the days of "One of Cleopatra's Nights" and "Chita" that we must turn. It is true that Hearn was a man of obvious ability even at the time of his sojourn in Cincinnati. If we may trust the tradition handed down to us by his associates of the *Enquirer* and the *Commercial*, his reputation as a journalist was high among them. But this was a very local and transitory reputation, at best. It was in New Orleans, encouraged by men like Marion Baker, George W. Cable, Dr. Rudolph Matas and Mark Bigney; and by women like Elizabeth Bisland (Mrs. Wetmore), that he began to be conscious of his powers, and to put them to good use.

Many stories are told about Hearn's departure from Cincinnati. Miss Kinnaird, a relative, in her biography, hints at a love-affair which did far more credit to his heart than to his head. There is a tradition of a long illness, when he was nursed by a faithful negress, and of an attempt to marry her by way of expressing his gratitude; which was frustrated by friends, who furnished the means to get him out of the city, on his way to New Orleans. But a stronger motive existed in the fascination which the tropics always exerted upon his imagination. The narrative published in the Birmingham *News* some years ago, by Rudolph Benson, based upon statements made by Edwin Henderson, then city editor of the Cincinnati *Commercial Gazette*, and afterwards city-clerk of Cincinnati, seems to me to explain perfectly why New Orleans attracted Hearn. Mr. Henderson says that Hearn had been on the *Enquirer*, and had done work for

that paper which was considered very remarkable, notably the reporting of the famous Tanyard murders; but had been dismissed by Mr. Cockerill "because, it was alleged, of his deplorable personal habits." What these "deplorable habits" were we are not informed. "He was very much depressed," continues Mr. Henderson, "and a chum of his who worked as a reporter on my staff, Jere Cochrane, brought him to me one day to see if I could not get him on our staff . . . I got Mr. Halstead's consent to employ him at a small salary. My impression is that we gave him $22.50 a week, which was a few dollars less than he had received from the *Enquirer* when that paper let him go. Hearn went to work as night police reporter, and in that capacity was frequently assigned to write-up events of a morbid character, which, it was considered he had peculiar ability in describing. The little, misshapen, repulsive-looking creature did great things. One of them was his exploit, famous at the time, of climbing to the top of the cross of the Cathedral and writing his experiences and a description of what he saw—a story which was reprinted all over the country and even translated for foreign papers.

"I don't recall the exact time, but it was one miserable winter night, or, to be more exact, early morning, when we were sitting at the large table in the *Commercial's* local room—two or three of us—under the defective gas-lights of that time. It was probably two or three o'clock in the morning. Hearn had got through with his written work, and was laboring with that one poor eye of his on a translation of 'One of Cleopatra's Nights'." [This is an error; "One of Cleopatra's Nights" was written some years later]. "Gradually our talk drifted to the subject of climates. I suppose we were led to it by the dismal character of the weather, the time of the night and the oppressive atmosphere.

"I mentioned an experience I had had a short time before in some little town in Alabama, in which, on my way back from New Orleans to Cincinnati, I had been detained overnight by some accident to the primitive train of that time. We had been advised to put up at that village, and go to the little hotel to wait a few hours until the next day for a train. I was assigned a room on the first floor. The place was lighted with lanterns and oil lamps. I remember going to sleep in a very nice bed in a very large room, but without any idea of where I was. Early in the morning I was awakened by the most delightful sounds of music. I was charmed by the notes, and going to the front of the house and opening one of the French windows, I looked out on the veranda in the early dawn. I found myself in the midst of a grove of beautiful, fragrant magnolias, and soon discovered that this wonderful melody that had awakened me came from the throats of mocking birds.

"While I was telling this I noticed that Hearn's one eye glistened brightly; that he was looking at me with open mouth. It struck me then in the midst of the horrors of the smoke and gloom of midwinter in Cincinnati, that my narrative must have seemed to him a beautiful fairy tale. Beyond that I gave the matter no further thought at the time.

"Shortly after this, a friend of mine, a physician, mentioned to me one afternoon that there was a splendid 'exclusive' for my paper down on Clark street,

below John. A boy was dying of hydrophobia. Here was an unusual story, an opportunity for vivid description, full of thrills, and sobs, and horrors. It was logically an assignment for Hearn. None could portray the agonizing death throes with all the harrowing details like he (*sic*). When the men came in for their assignments in the afternoon I gave Hearn the particulars as far as I knew them, told him to go to the house, and told him it was a splendid opportunity for him to show his ability. I dismissed the matter from my mind.

"That night, when most of the day copy was in, I asked for Hearn. Nobody knew where he was, until somebody said that he had seen him in the Mercantile Library, looking at some French books. I had to go at ten o'clock at night and write up the hydrophobia story as well as I could, but it was an 'exclusive,' anyway. The next day when Hearn came in, I mildly asked him why he had fallen down on his work the day before, and I distinctly remember his reply: 'I have lost my loyalty to this paper. In fact, I have not been fit to work in this climate since your Alabama story of mocking birds and magnolias. I am going to leave this city and get south to New Orleans, if possible.' I understood Hearn so thoroughly that I simply sympathized with him. . . . A few weeks later I personally carried Hearn's valise down to the train in the Little Miami Depot, into which the old Louisville road was running, and helped him up the steps of the day coach, and carried the valise after him. I had already provided him with transportation to Memphis, and had arranged that from Memphis he should have Mississippi river transportation to New Orleans."

After making due allowances for the exuberance of reportorial imagination, and for the exaggerations of memory after so long a lapse of time, this narrative, it seems to me, gives us the real reason why Hearn, always a wanderer, with his imagination haunted by the vision of the tropics, turned his feet southward. At the same time I should mention that Col. J. W. Fairfax, of New Orleans, who still lives at an advanced age, and who was Hearn's first employer in New Orleans, in an unpublished statement which he has made regarding Hearn's residence here, gives as his belief that Hearn was sent to New Orleans by certain Northern newspapers to prepare a series of articles on the work of the Returning Board, but that, finding this an exceedingly unpopular assignment in the Crescent City at that time, he was unable to carry it out in accordance with his instructions. There is no doubt, that Hearn's early experiences in New Orleans were unpleasant. In one of his letters to his printer-friend, Watkin, he says: "Have been seven months in the city. No possible prospect of doing anything in this town now or within twenty-five years." And he intimated his intention of casting himself into the Mississippi unless some improvement in his condition took place without delay. That improvement came within 24 hours. When he was received into the *Item* office, the evil days were at an end; and if his subsequent career was not altogether and uninterruptedly pleasant, at least there was not again question of food and lodging. Of those essentials he was thereafter assured.

New Orleans made a deep impression upon him from the first. Something of this makes itself felt in an article which he wrote for the *Item* in the first days of his connection with the paper, and to which he gave the characteristic title of "The Glamor of New Orleans":

The season has come at last, when strangers may visit us without fear, and experience with unalloyed pleasure the first delicious impression of the most beautiful and picturesque old city in North America. For in this season is the glamour of New Orleans strongest upon those whom she attracts to her from less hospitable climates, and fascinates by her nights of magical moonlight, and her days of dreamy langours and perfumes. There are few who can visit her for the first time without delight; and few who can ever leave her without regret; and none who can forget her strange charm when they have once felt its influence.

To a native of the bleaker Northern clime —if he have any poetical sense of the beautiful in nature, any love of bright verdure and luxuriance of landscape—the approach to the city by river, must be in itself something indescribably pleasant. The white steamer gliding through an unfamiliar world of blue and green—blue above and blue below, with a long strip of low green land alone to break the ethereal azure—the waving cane; the evergreen fringe of groves weird with moss; the tepid breezes and golden sunlight—all deepening in their charm as the city is neared, make the voyage seem beautiful as though one were sailing to some far-off glimmering Eden, into the garden of Paradise itself.

And then, the first impression of the old Creole city slumbering under the glorious sun; of its quaint houses; its shaded streets; its suggestions of a hundred years ago; its contrasts of agreeable color; its streets reechoing the tongues of many nations; its general look of somnolent contentment; its verdant antiquity; its venerable memorials and monuments; its eccentricities of architecture, its tropical gardens; its picturesque surprises; its warm atmosphere, drowsy perhaps with the perfume of orange flowers, and thrilled with the fantastic music of mocking birds—cannot ever be wholly forgotten. For a hundred years and more has New Orleans been drawing hither wandering souls from all the ends of the earth. The natives of India and of Japan have walked upon her pavements; Chinese and swarthy natives of Manila; children of the Antilles and of South America; subjects of the Sultan and sailors of the Ionian sea have sought homes here.. All civilized nations have sent wandering children hither. All cities of the North, East and West have yielded up some restless souls to the far-off Southern city, whose spell is so mystic, so sweet, so universal.

And to these wondering and wandering ones, this sleepy, beautiful, quaint old city murmurs: "Rest with me. I am old; but thou hast never met with a younger more beautiful than I. I dwell in eternal summer; I dream in perennial sunshine; I sleep in magical moonlight. My streets are flecked with strange sharp shadows; and sometimes also the Shadow of Death falleth upon them; but if thou wilt not fear thou art safe. My charms are not the charms of much gold and great riches; but thou mayest feel with me such hope and content as thou hast never felt before. I offer thee eternal summer, and a sky divinely blue; sweet breezes and sweet perfumes, bright fruits, and flowers fairer than the rainbow. Rest with me. For if thou leavest me, thou must forever remember me with regret." And assuredly those who wander from her may never cease to behold her in their dreams—quaint, beautiful, and sunny as of old—and to feel at long intervals the return of the first charm—the first delicious fascination of the fairest city of the South.*

At that time the *Item* was published in a shabby building on Gravier street. The paper had been established a year or two before by a body of discontented printers, on a co-operative basis, which failed to prove entirely practical. Col. Fairfax, a local broker, had interested himself in the enterprise, advanced money on the stock, and thus become owner of most, if not all, of the shares.

* Item, November 26, 1878.

He had the assistance of Mark Bigney in the editorial department. Bigney was a man of education and literary tastes, with pretensions to poetship; a man who was quick to recognize a talent like Hearn's. There seems to be some doubt whether it was to Bigney or Fairfax that Hearn first applied for employment; at any rate, the question was one that Fairfax had to decide, and when it was decided, Hearn found himself "associate" editor of the paper.° "at a salary considerably smaller than I received on the *Commercial,*" as he wrote to Watkin, "but large enough to save half of it."

Fairfax gives in his unpublished memoir an interesting description of Hearn: "Hearn was a most unprepossessing object at first sight. That odd, rolling eye of his was the only thing you could see at first—enormous, protruding. After you got used to that eye, you saw that his other features were very good, and his face refined. But, in addition, when he first presented himself here he was miserably dressed, and even his hands were grimy and his nails black. One reason why Bigney hesitated about taking him on was that we had heard that he had to leave Memphis on account of his violently Republican ideas. Perhaps I oughtn't to tell that even now—but surely the war is over by this time! In those days, however, it was a serious thing in this part of the world, and it worked against Hearn. We took him on, though, and I had such sympathy for the poor fellow, who looked as though he hadn't had a good meal in months, and seemed to feel so keenly the way the boys treated him on account of his Republican ideas, and his queer appearance and all that, that I asked him to come up to our house to dinner—not once, but again and again—twice a week, for a good while. Just the other day my wife was recalling to me the time he first came. Dressed in a blue coat, linen trousers, his coat buttoned up to his throat to hide the shirt, which must have been far from clean —'Wasn't he an odd sight?' said my wife. And shy? Why, that first meal he just sat and crumbled his bread—would scarcely eat a mouthful. Ours was a big family, and there were almost always guests, and until he got over his shyness we used almost to ignore him—going on with the family routine as if he were not there, to avoid embarrassing him. But when he got over that shyness he was a charming talker; and we grew attached to him."

Hearn remained on the *Item* three and a half years. Col. Fairfax says: "He was lazy about the routine work. We had to prod him up; but when he would write one of his own little fanciful things, out of his own head—dreams —he was always dreaming—lived in dreams—why, then he would work like mad." This is, perhaps, correct; but in examining the files of the *Item* I have found so many evidences of Hearn's industry that I fear that Col. Fairfax's memory has failed him in this one detail. In addition to "his own little fanciful things" Hearn contributed editorials, translations, sketches, news articles, verses, even cartoons. To one acquainted with the routine of a daily newspaper, the variety and value of his work is too great to justify the slighting tone in which his former

° The connection with the Item lasted from June, 1878, to December, 1881.

employer refers to it. In addition to these varied literary activities, he wrote the series of "Fantastics," which, lately recovered by Professor Hutson, at my suggestion and with my assistance, and published in a small volume by Houghton, Mifflin & Company, reveal a hitherto unsuspected and amazingly beautiful side of his extraordinary talent. His work as a cartoonist is almost entirely unknown. "He drew the cartoons," says Col. Fairfax, in the reminiscences from which I have already quoted, "and they were the first newspaper cartoons in this part of the country; he cut them with his pen-knife on the backs of old wooden types, which had been used for advertisements. They were just the right height to fit into the bed—we used the old-fashioned flat-bed press, of course—and every day he would whittle out those drawings." Col. Fairfax is probably in error in attributing to Hearn the execution as well as the ideas of these remarkable works of art. It seems more likely that the rough sketches were put on the wood by Bennet & Zennecke, a firm of engravers employed occasionally by the *Item;* but the reminiscence is interesting as establishing the authorship of these trifles so totally at variance with the nature of Hearn's subsequent work.

It is a remarkable fact that Hearn's newspaper work in New Orleans reveals a thoroughly practical, commonsense attitude towards men and things. He kept himself informed of the latest developments in letters, art and science in Europe; and he wrote about them with the highest appreciation and intelligence; but he was equally well-informed about what was going on locally, and although he was not entrusted with the preparation of the political editorials in the *Item,* to every other subject which he discussed he brought a perfectly sound, clear, matter-of-fact judgment. From the very first he exhibited a philosophic tendency, but it was a tendency which never carried him beyond the limits proper to daily journalism. His ambition appears to have been to tincture with letters the matter which he wrote for the paper, but always to keep it where the average reader might follow and understand.

When Hearn first came to New Orleans he had lodged at 228 Baronne street, and later took up his abode in an old house in the French quarter* about which he wrote to Krehbiel in 1877:

> Let me give you a description of my new residence. I never knew what the beauty of an old Creole home was until now. I do not believe one could find anything more picturesque outside of Venice or Florence. For six months I had been trying to get a room in one of these curious buildings; but the rent seemed to me maliciously enormous. However, I at last obtained one for $3 per week. Yet it is on the third floor, rear building;—these old princes of the South built always double edifices, covering an enormous space of ground, with broad wings, courtyards and slave quarters.
>
> The building is on St. Louis street, a street several hundred years old. I enter by a huge archway about a hundred feet long,—full of rolling echoes, and commencing to become verdant with a thin growth of bright moss. At the end, the archway opens into a court. There are a few graceful bananas here with their giant leaves splitting in ribbons in the summer sun, so that they look like young palms. Lord! How the carriages must have thundered under that archway and through the broad paved court in the old days. The stables are here still; but the blooded horses are gone, and the family carriage, with its

* Probably 146 Bourbon street. It is known that Hearn lived here for some time.

French coat of arms, has disappeared. There is only a huge wagon left to crumble to pieces. A hoary dog sleeps like a stone sphinx at a corner of the broad stairway; and I fancy that in his still slumbers he might be dreaming of a Creole master who went out with Beauregard or Lee and never came back again. Wonder if the great greyhound is waiting for him?

The dog never notices me. I am not of his generation, and I creep quietly by lest I might disturb his dreams of the dead South. I go up the broad stairway. At every landing a vista of broad archways re-echoes my steps—archways that once led to rooms worthy of a prince. But the rooms are now cold and cheerless and vast with emptiness. Tinted in pale green or yellow, with a ceiling moulded with Renaissance figures in plaster, the ghost of luxury and wealth seems trying to linger in them. I pass them by, and taking my way through an archway on the right, find myself on a broad piazza, at the end of which is my room.

"It is vast enough for a Carnival ball. Five windows and glass doors open flush with the floor and rise to the ceilings. They open on two sides upon the piazza, whence I have a far view of tropical gardens and masses of building, half-ruined but still magnificent. The walls are tinted pale orange colour; green curtains drape the doors and windows; and the mantelpiece, surmounted by a long oval mirror of Venetian pattern, is of white marble veined like the bosom of a Naiad. In the center of the huge apartment rises a bed as massive as a fortress, with tremendous columns of carved mahogany supporting a curtained canopy at the height of sixteen feet. It seems to touch the ceiling, yet it does not. There is no carpet on the floor, no pictures on the wall—a sense of something dead and lost fills the place with a gentle melancholy;—the breezes play fantastically with the pallid curtains, and the breath of flowers ascends into the chamber from the verdant gardens below. Oh, the silence of this house, the perfume and the romance of it. A beautiful young Frenchwoman appears once a day in my neighborhood to arrange the room; but she comes like a ghost and disappears too soon in the recesses of the awful house. I would like to speak with her, for her lips drop honey, and her voice is richly sweet like the cooing of a dove.

Another time he writes, presumably about the same house, though the letter is written sometime late in the following year,—after the yellow fever epidemic through which he passed with only a severe attack of dengue:

You may remember I described this house to you as haunted-looking. It is delicious, therefore, to find out that it is actually a haunted house. But the ghosts do not trouble me. I have become so much like one of themselves in my habits. There is one room, however, where no one likes to be alone; for phantom hands clap, and phantom feet stamp behind them. 'And what does that signify?' I asked a servant. *'Ca veut dire, Foulex-moi le camp'*—a vulgar expression for 'Git'."

It is probably this same ancient dwelling that figures in a sketch published by Hearn in the *Item* in November, 1879, under the title of "The Old Creole House."

An atmosphere of tranquility and quiet happiness seemed to envelope the old house, which had formerly belonged to a rich planter. Like many of the Creole houses, the facade presented a commonplace and unattractive aspect. The great green doors of the arched entrance were closed; and the green shutters of the balconied windows were half shut, like sleepy eyes lazily gazing upon the busy street below or the cottony patches of light clouds which floated slowly, slowly across the deep blue of the sky above.

But beyond the gates lay a little paradise. The great court, deep and broad, was framed in tropical green; vines embraced the white pillars of the piazza, and creeping plants climbed up the tinted walls to peer into the upper windows with their flower-eyes of flaming scarlet. Banana trees nodded sleepily their plumes of emerald green at the further end of the garden; vines smothered the windows of the dining-room, and formed a bower of cool green about the

nospitable door; an aged fig tree whose gnarled arms trembled under the weight of honied fruit, shadowed the square of bright lawn which formed a natural carpet in the midst; and at intervals were stationed along the walks in large porcelain vases,—like barbaric sentinels in sentry boxes,—gorgeous broad-leaved things, with leaves fantastic and barbed and flowers brilliant as humming birds.

A fountain murmured faintly near the entrance of the western piazza; and there came from the shadows of the fig tree the sweet and plaintive cooing of amorous doves. Without cotton floats might rumble, and street cars vulgarly jingle their bells; but these were mere echoes of the harsh outer world which disturbed not the delicious quiet within—where sat, in old-fashioned chairs, good old-fashioned people who spoke the tongue of other times, and observed many quaint and knightly courtesies forgotton in this material era. Without, reared the Iron Age, the angry waves of American traffic; within, one heard only the murmur of the languid fountain, the sound of deeply musical voices conversing in the languages of Paris and Madrid, the playful chatter of dark-haired children lisping in sweet and many voweled Creole, and through it all, the soft, caressing coo of doves.

Without, it was the year 1879; within, it was the epoch of the Spanish domination. A guitar lay upon the rustic bench near the fountain, where it had evidently been forgotten, and a silk fan beside it; a European periodical, with graceful etchings, hung upon the back of a rocking chair at the door, through which one caught glimpses of a snowy table bearing bottles of good Bordeaux, and inhaled the odor of rich West India tobacco. And yet some people wonder that some other people never care to cross Canal street.*

These dilapidated mansions fascinated Hearn. He referred to his own lodgings many times in his correspondence. In 1881 he writes to Krehbiel again:

I am living in a ruined Creole house; damp walls green with age, zig-zag cracks running down the facade, a great yard with plants and cacti in it; a quixotic horse, four cats, two rabbits, three dogs, five geese, and a seraglio of hens—all living together in harmony. A fortune-teller occupies the lower floor. She has a fantastic apartment kept dark all day, except for the light of two little tapers burning before two human skulls in one corner of the room. It is a very mysterious house indeed. ...But I am growing very weary of the Creole quarter, and think I shall pull up stakes and fly to the garden district where the orange trees are, but where Latin tongues are not spoken. It is very hard to accustom oneself to live with Americans, however, after one has lived for three years among these strange types. I am swindled all the time and I know it, and still I find it hard to summon up resolution to forsake these antiquated streets for the commonplace and practical American districts.

At this time Hearn was studying the Spanish language, expecting to go to the tropics. His interest in Spanish found vent in one of his *Item* editorials, written in the early part of that year:

The future relations which the republics of South America must hold towards the United States, will probably render the Spanish tongue as familiar to the Americans of the North as the French language to the nations of Europe. During the last few years even, the influence of the Spanish language has made itself perceptible in Northern commercial centres. In the cities which hold commercial relations with South American ports, a knowledge of Spanish has become especially desirable for young men who engage in foreign trade; and one of the leading American papers,—the New York Times—regularly issues an immense edition printed in the Spanish language for the Southern trade. Some years ago, in New York, Boston, Baltimore, and other ports, there were probably twenty French or German to one Spanish teacher.

This is no longer the case; and many of the Spanish refugees from Cuba and else-

* Item, Nov. 11, 1879.

where have found it an easy matter to obtain a good livelihood in the East as professors of their native language. The same facts are observable on the Pacific coast, where an immense trade is being established between the Western Republics of South America and the Golden Gate. Recently the project of a railroad connecting the Northern and Middle States with the City of Mexico has created, we are informed, much interest in the Spanish language in St. Louis and even practical Chicago; and at New Orleans we have ample evidence that within a twelvemonth more persons have undertaken the study of Spanish than has been known for many years. There is a large demand for Spanish grammars, dictionaries, and systems of self-instruction like those of Ollendorf or De Torno; while Spanish teachers have less difficulty in finding pupils than ever before. When we remember that the Spanish language, or a corruption of it, is spoken by a population living in Southern and Central America, numerically equal to that of the United States, and that intimate commercial relations must sooner or later be established between the Anglo-Saxon and Spanish countries of the Americans, it must be evident that the language of the former must finally assume much more importance in the latter. How far its influence may ultimately extend, it is impossible to foresee; especially in view of the fact that the English tongue does not seem, like the English race, to force its way triumphantly into all parts of the world. The Latin races have in modern times succeeded in making their languages mediums of polite intercourse or commercial relationship for the whole civilized world, which the English or German nations have never been able to do. French is spoken in all parts of the world, and French literature delights the polite society of all nations.

The Spanish language is probably spoken by more than ninety millions of people as a mother tongue, but is no doubt familiar to a vastly greater number. The Italian language is spoken all along the Mediterranean from Gibraltar to Constantinople, and from Tangier to Smyrna; besides being the language of the musical art, and having literary claims only second to those of the French as a Latin language. While the languages which we might term Northern do not affect the Latin languages perceptibly, the latter, on the other hand, have very considerably affected the English tongue, even in the last twenty years. In future years it is not improbable that Spanish influence upon the language and literature of North America will be perceptible.*

Later in the same year, 1879, he writes:

My salary has been raised three times. Since the close of the sickly season my only thought has been to free myself from the yoke of dependence on the whims of employers—from the harness of journalism. I hired myself a room in the northern end of the French Quarter (near the Spanish), 106 Bourbon, between Toulouse and St. Louis, bought myself a complete set of cooking utensils and kitchen-ware, and kept house for myself. I got my expenses down to $2 per week, and kept them at that (exclusive of rent, of course) although my salary rose to $20. Thus I learned to cook pretty well; also to save money, and will start a little business for myself next week. I have an excellent partner—a Northern man—and we expect by spring to clear enough ready money to start for South America.

This business enterprise was the "5-Cent Restaurant," at 160 Dryades street, which is mentioned also in his letters to his printer friend Watkin, and which resulted, as did all his financial ventures, in his being cheated by his more astute partner.

* Item, April 16, 1879.

The Centaurs

By ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH

Summer

Out along the wet clinging sands we gallop,
Throwing a mist of flying grains behind us,
Splashing into the water, cool and green,
Dipping hands under the swaying surface to throw over heaving sides,
Letting the bubble-crested waves fling their spray into our faces,
Ere we walk back with streaming fetlocks, wringing the water from our hair,
Into the hidden green of the forest.

Flight

Clatter and clash of galloping small hoofs
Over the stones and roots between the trees,
Whipping of yellow hair frantic across straining shoulders,
Rhythmic flexing of haunches, streaming of tail,
And behind the thunder, thunder, thunder
Of great black hoofs
And sibilant breathing, and outstretched knotted hands.

Death

The blood that drips down to the grass from my wounded side
Hangs on the blades like small heavy scarlet flowers,
A pathway to death, along which my hoofs stumble.
And still on my sweating hair lies the garland of hawthorne,
And still on my cheeks a red which is not the red of blood,
But my sinews and bones bend with the weight of this one light arrow
Hard driven through my side
And I stumble along the red-flowered path of my death.

Polished Surfaces

By EDITH CHAPMAN

LAURA sighed as she glanced about her at the charming room. She had been sitting here opposite the west window all the afternoon, alternately reading and glancing about her. Her complete, almost rapturous satisfaction struck her as rather blatant. It wasn't as though her life had been without its real excitements. There was nothing exciting in just sitting and sitting in no matter how beautiful a room. And nothing more satisfying. The temper of the walls, the lines of the chair across from her, the weathered rich blue of an old Egyptian vase, on either side of which the white narcissi looked so fragile, gave her the same sense of violent, not too immoderate pleasure that some music gave her, an occasional novel or scent, and still more rarely a human relationship. On the whole, the room gave her more pleasure than any of these. It was so stable and so subordinate. Such an ideal frame for the kind of life she managed to lead.

She laughed a little, out loud. Here she had been sitting for almost three hours and hugging to her the sense of her beautiful existence. She had wasted an incredible amount of time. But wasn't that the satisfactory thing about it all, that she could waste her time, not in a vulgar fashion but intentionally and so remuneratively? She let her eyes stray from the wood inlay of her Dutch desk to the insistent glint of green of that woman's eyes in the portrait yonder. Was that woman really herself? Was she like that? George had insisted on the black gown which blanched her hair to a pale amber, whitened her skin and the pearls on her bare neck.

Where had she read that all blonde women are cold? Was she as cold as the portrait made her look? As listless, as complacent? If she was cold it was because George had made her so, because he wanted her like that. He wanted her practically lifeless; a beautiful *objet d'art* to add to his collection, and set in the center of his charming house. He wanted all of her gestures rehearsed like those of a formal dance. "No part of life," he had once told her, "has any value that hasn't form and beauty, its definite place in a scheme." Yes, he had made her over to fit into his scheme, and now she fitted so well that she was happy, radiantly happy. She could imagine no other life. He had taught her how to wring from every moment its maximum of aesthetic satisfaction. He had shown her how to intensify these moments, how to prolong them.

There was the daily keen zest in merely being alive. There was her morning bath, hot and then viciously cold, which he had taught her to love; there was her breakfast in the bright morning room, at the long low table where—with him beside her to instruct her—she had learned to savor the color as well as the taste of the purple grapes in the blue bowl; to smell the coffee before she drank it; to reject the bacon when it

wasn't crisp enough. There was her daily riding or swimming; her leisurely luncheons, often with friends; her afternoons with them or quite alone, like the one which was just ending. And there was the daily climax of his coming home to the evenings which were his, absolutely his, as he had warned her. She had the day; that was enough . . . He would be coming soon.

She smoothed down her dress a little nervously. It was a black gown very like the one she wore in the portrait. Black was all he would let her wear these days; any texture or fabric but invariably black. What was the good, he had asked, of being so extravagantly delicate and fair if one didn't fulfill the obligations of such a type? Her slender hands fluttered in her lap. She wondered what he would say to the jade in her ears. It was the touch of color which she liked and which he claimed she didn't need. That was the kind of vulgarity he couldn't forgive her. She didn't need to *pronounce* herself, accent herself in any way. Besides, he disliked all jewelry on her except the pearls he had given her. She wasn't quite at ease with him, not even after five years. The pitch of his fastidiousness was still something of a strain. Yet that was the price one paid for such a life as hers. Such happiness! After all, what woman did she know who was valued as she was?

The door opened softly. "George," she sighed, and the fluttering of her hands stopped.

He walked across the room to her and without a word removed the earrings from her ears. Then he bent and kissed her. "They would spoil everything," he told her mournfully. "I should suppose you would have understood how they spoil everything."

She said nothing, but sat fingering them lovingly. They lay very vivid and insistent on her palm.

"Leave them," he advised her, "to courtesans and the wives of traveling salesmen. They aren't your style. Why shouldn't you understand?"

Then as she still held them and gazed at them a little wistfully, "Won't you do me the kindness to put them away?"

She rose and going over to the mantelpiece, dropped them to the bottom of a tall crystal vase. They landed with an ominous click which convinced her that they were broken. On her way back to him she rang for tea.

He looked at her with fond possessive eyes and patted the arm of his chair suggestively after the butler had brought the tray and left the room. "Won't you come over here?"

She came to him instantly but with a slow grace, and sat down beside him, her white hands folded in her lap.

He picked up one of them and raised it to his lips. It was limper, more tapering, if anything, than the painted hands of the lady on the wall. "What have you been doing today?" he inquired. Have you been reading that last Claudel; didn't you enjoy it?"

"My dear, I haven't read a line. I've just been sitting all the afternoon like a sleepy cat and thanking the gods that this place is as it is," she included the room with a sweeping gesture of her free arm which afterwards she passed around his neck—"and I am as I am."

"It is rather good, isn't it? I like the way you have arranged those flowers. Very subtle. You're getting to understand."

She tried not to resent the patronage in his tone. "It is so perfect that I would like not to go away again for a very long time; not anywhere. I would like just to stay here and enjoy it."

He glanced about him with the loving tired eye of the connoisseur. "I am glad you feel that way. It means the end of restlessness. You've been very restless, Laura. It is only in a constant environment that one can really live."

She was relieved to see that he had forgotten the earrings. "What have you been doing?" she asked him.

"I spent the afternoon at Morrison's, looking at some woodcuts he found for me. I have practically decided to keep two of them. One reminds me of you; a woman's nude figure very white against a background of dark trees. It will do very well just there," and he pointed to some wall space over the couch on which she had been sitting. "The work was rather fine... Then I got this for you." He felt in his pocket and drew out a flat, slender parcel, which he kept in his hands a moment turning over and over. Finally he handed it to her.

She recognized by the gesture that it was something which he valued. She tore off the paper and found an old battered French copy of the "Mort d'Arthur." It was a first edition. He had been trying to get hold of this for a long time. She turned the pages reverently. She scarcely knew how to thank him. Her fingers pressed his; she laid her pale, smooth cheek against his hair. The book slid gently to the floor. Against the grey of the rug the dark leather took on tone. It was worn down to the mat in places and two of the corners were quite rubbed away.

She let her thin fingers move over the surface of her husband's coat. She had an impulse to talk to him, to clutch in words some of the incoherent thoughts that were flowing through her mind. They seemed to her rather beautiful and worth while. But she seemed unable to check their continuous flowing. Words cost her such an effort; more of one even than bending down to pick up the dropped book. And for George one had to choose them so carefully. He didn't like loose or undiscriminating phrases. "Don't bother to talk, Laura," he had once advised her, "unless you have something to say. Insignificant ideas are much better unexpressed. Just read and watch and think. Standards take a long time to acquire. When you have them the words will come easily." Whenever she had her present impulse to talk to him she remembered this injunction. And it increased her listlessness. As he had said, silence was so much simpler.

Today, however, she felt almost compelled to try to describe that feeling of elation which had stimulated her all the afternoon. Unless she could find some relief for it in words it would come to be a real oppression. "George," she whispered timidly, "George darling, have you ever felt as though you had come to the end of something without understanding why or what? A feeling of happiness so poignant and intense that one knows it can't last. As if a very exquisite emotion were charged to its farthest limit. George what is such a feeling? Can you tell me?"

He patted her hand. As she raised her head to look at him she noticed for the first time how exhausted he looked.

The corners of his mouth drooped; the thin lips were pale; his eyelids seemed very heavy; as if he raised them with difficulty to look back into her tense, eager eyes. "Dearest, I'm terribly tired. Should you mind if I drowsed off for a moment? You won't go away?" He pressed her wrist a little as though to detain her.

"No, I'll stay right here."

He smiled again. "I didn't quite hear your question. Something about your mood, wasn't it? It sounded rather charming. Ask me again later on..." His voice trailed off.

She watched him while he slept. The eyelids had fallen completely down now concealing his large, too luminous eyes. His brown, gaunt cheeks sagged in like a deathmask's. Even the nostrils flattened inward. Against the flesh of her arm, still encircling him, she felt the silky softness of his fine thick hair. There was something almost perilous about his frailty with the tension of consciousness gone from it. She let her eyes follow down his figure to where his hand lay lifeless on hers.

Was it her nerves? His whole body seemed to her suddenly lifeless. The breath no longer dented and expanded his nostrils. Nothing about him vibrated. There was an abnormal stillness around them both. Hysterically she jerked her arm free of his hair which felt to her suddenly like the hair on a corpse. As she moved farther on from him, watching him, her eyes distended with horror, she was abruptly conscious of the most inexplicable sensation; a feeling of relief and joy so acute that it was almost pain. Inside her innumerable tight bands seemed to be snapping. He was dead. Her whole life would be changed. The charmed stillness into which he had frozen her was broken. She was no longer part of a plan, his plan. She needn't even bother to be beautiful any longer. She could be her futile and perfectly mediocre self. She was free... In the thrill of this sudden freedom her whole body grew tense.

It was this uncomfortable feeling of strain and tautness in her muscles that brought her back to her senses. She recoiled on herself in horror. Had she gone mad? George was dead here in front of her and she had been sitting there rejoicing in the fact. "George," she cried out frantically, "look at me; speak to me." And in an agony of apprehension she leant forward and began to chafe his cold hands.

Her husband's eyes slowly opened and then with a jerk he sat up. "Laura, what is it? Something startled me. Laura, is it you? Are you ill?"

For she had slid from the chair-arm down to the floor and, with her head against her knees, her arms stretched out over his body, she was violently weeping. He tried to raise her onto his lap.

"My darling, what is it? Can't you tell me?"

"You frightened me so," she moaned. "You were so still; you scarcely breathed. For a moment I thought you were dead." She clutched his arms desperately, and raising her head stared at him out of tear-drenched, terrified eyes. "George, you'll never frighten me again like that? Promise me."

He laughed reassuringly but a shadow of displeasure crossed his face. He disliked emotional scenes. "Laura, you are hysterical; pull yourself together."

Then, as though to distract her, "tell me what you were starting to tell me just as I dropped off to sleep."

She continued to look at him without speaking.

"Try to tell me," he urged. This last was practically a command.

The look of anguish still distorted her face. Tears flowed down her cheeks every second or so. "It was a feeling I had," she answered brokenly, "that I wanted to describe to you. A feeling that something very beautiful was ending."

The frown deepened around his eyes. "You sound so theatrical. Something was ending? What sort of thing? Don't be so vague."

"I can't be any more definite; the feeling was vague, but real. It was true."

"Laura, this is nerves; make some effort to control yourself," for her head had fallen forward onto his knees again and she was sobbing so that her whole body shook. "What has happened to you? Nothing is any different than it was an hour ago."

Then, as her sobbing seemed to diminish, but since she still knelt there, "Hadn't we better end this scene and go and dress?"

She rose obediently. She was very pale but quiet now; her eyes were dry. "Everything is different," she told him sadly, "and it all happened so suddenly. Only an hour ago, as you say, I was so happy."

He ground his chair violently into the rug as he rose. "Why do you talk in that strain? It is so histrionic, so vulgar. Be good enough to state what you mean in concise terms. What was different an hour ago?"

"I was." She stooped and picked up from the floor the soft and crumpled "Mort d'Arthur." She pressed out the leaves with care. "After dinner we might read a chapter or so don't you think?"

He nodded. He was glad to know that the scene had ended.

From the wall the cold eyes of the woman in the portrait smiled down at her. The pale gold hair curved around the smooth forehead in medieval fashion. Her own hair was ruffled and disordered. She raised her hands to it perfunctorily. This ruffled state must never occur again. Neither to her hair nor to any part of her. She must maintain her cold, sure poise against any future interruption. As she climbed slowly the stairs to her bedroom she resolved to become as nearly as possible the living prototype of that inscrutable woman in the frame.

Potiphar's Wife

By PAUL ELDRIDGE

At last I had my will,
Vain Yossup—
Our royal dust is mingled together
Upon the flat hind-hoofs
Of a pregnant she-Elephant,
Loaded with slaves!

Vagaries Malicieux

By DJUNA BARNES

FOR years one has dreamed of Paris, just why, no man can tell, saving that no pear from an orchard stolen, has been atoned for without the mental calculation: "A Frenchman would have understood; in Paris all would be so simple, so charming!"

No man dares have a fixed opinion on life, love or literature until he has been to Paris, for there is always someone at his elbow to hiss: "Have you visited the Louvre? Have you reacted to Giotto? Have you run your hand over the furniture of the fifteenth century? Seen the spot where Marie Antoinette became most haughty? No? Well then, my dear friend, keep in your place."

Every day of one's life one has heard such things as: "When your dear father was drinking a whiskey and soda one night on the Avenue de l'Opera, he was accosted by two women, one with a rose in her teeth, and one without" or "Well, of course, I know that all philosophies contradict themselves in the end, so I have made it a point never to do anything about it, until I visited Paris, then I knew that I just had to express myself!"

I have two friends who always go to the opera, who never miss a D'alvarez concert. One of these gentlemen is very fond of cats and does a great deal of stroking in the season, the other is a playwright who is utterly reckless about the number of objects in Europe on which he casts what is known as his libido.

Both of these gentlemen have been taken side face in Rome with a pigeon on either shoulder and three at their feet; each has eaten ducks in the only place where ducks die for the pleasure of it (I never found out where the place is); and both of them came back wearing cameos of the younger, darker sons of disgraced but lordly families.

And so it was that I, also, came to Europe.

It was a one class boat—to those without discrimination. The cargo was chiefly disappointed teachers from the Middle West, who sat on deck eating gift fruit sarcastically. In the evening they turned into the salon, drinking triple sec and trying to win at cards. A few of them thought they were being continental when they submitted to foreign embraces.

On board this boat there was a Frenchman, a gentleman, a professor, who had turned forty-three or so, who had possessed three hundred women and who was still under the delusion that "love makes the world go 'round."

The only member of the crew who spoke English was the one stewardess. She spoke with a distinct cockney accent, was nearly always drunk and explained it by saying that she was homesick for London. The nearer England we got the drunker she became, and finally ended by singing a Welsh war song while the students were singing the Marsellaise.

I sat at the captain's table with four others, one the professor, one a Belgian,

who was returning to his country to sympathize, and the other two were ladies who had seen life and turned discreetly aside at the age of forty to let the rest of it pass unnoticed if it cared to. One of them spoke a magnificently degenerate French, which made the captain laugh, and was his undoing.

This lady carried a dog which she called "Fifi" after some French heroine who had lived a life somewhat on the dog's mincing and fluffy order and who had cried for cherry tarts and got them.

The other lady was a widow, a little less certain, and her passion was ice. As for me I laughed—I laughed a great deal. The laugh is unusual. After one laugh the entire dining room was speculating on me—after the second they had made up their minds—after the third they were leading my life.

In the evening I remembered a sorrow, but the good, kind professor had a past. It went something like this:

"I have a nice mouth, but once it was prettier. That was when I had white teeth. Women used to turn and look at me, and one lady, she was a marquise, gave up her horse and carriage to follow me on foot, and still another girl, a Spaniard who had spent most of her life in Madrid, was willing to give up her husband and all her impressions—"

I said, "Was that necessary?"

He said, "No, that's the trouble, women always want to give up something."

I said, "Isn't the sea beautiful?"

He said, "I don't know. I can never be certain about great quantities of things—"

Later he talked of love.

"Love," he said, "should be miraculous, fastidious, and hopeless. We French have a strange feeling about American men. American women! Ah, there is something vital and lively about them—something proud and unreached. The American man makes love somewhat in the fashion of a Frenchman fishing." He went on,— "I was walking along the banks of the Seine one day with a lady. We passed three men in the course of our walk, all were intent on the sport of angling, but not one of those three lines came within inches of the water. 'What is the matter?' asked the lady. 'The matter,' I said, 'is that they cannot afford string.' " There was a long pause in which the sea continued, "Then, too," the professor went on, "the average man believes in *toutjours tout suite.*"

We heard a soft laughing sound, and looking down we saw a lady journalist lying on her stomach under a life boat with a Corona and a fountain pen.

We went away from there.

At about four one morning, by the reported time, though my watch, which had been set ahead half an hour every day, said two, the French woman inhabiting my cabin, leapt from her bunk with an exclamation, and cried:

"Ah, unequalled France!" or words to that effect.

Le Havre lay before us. Two little French children stood at the extreme end of a jutting point of land, and called out to the pilot boat which was just pushing off. Behind them a blank wall reared up, and an enormous but shabby sign announced some inferior make of French soap.

From Le Havre one takes a train. The train meets the boat. In fact, the train could be said to apprehend the boat. It creeps up a cobbled road and

almost butts its nose into the nose of the sea.

Ah, those amazing French trains! No comfort, but what atmosphere—no place to rest the elbows, but what companions! One negro, smoking a black cigar—one man from the Pyrenees in rough tweed—one heiress from the States with a slight down on her upper lip—one young woman from New Orleans on her way to Neufchâtel to lay claim to a coat-of-arms, and one gentleman from Havana who kept weighing his watch chain!

For hours the little train struggled with the ground and finally conquered, running up a hill, on top of which stood the Black Virgin.

Rouen passed. Everyone crowded to the windows, but there were no fields of poppies on that side, only a melancholy hill rose, and one church far in the distance, crouched among long grass in which no bird sang.

The Seine came into view. Placid people lay on their backs under trees, and children dipped their naked bodies in the slow thin water.

There were tears in the eyes of the Professor who had accompanied me to the very end, and I asked him if he suffered.

"Ah, *ma chérie*," he answered, "this is a very sad ride for a Frenchman who has been many years out in the States. One realizes how much of France has lived and died; and then there are so many lovely young women who have grown old and have not known me!"

Presently everyone, saving myself and the Professor, slept. The negro's cigar had gone out. The gentleman from Havana had let his charms come to a standstill. The coat-of-arms, for which the young lady from New Orleans had ridden many an uncomfortable mile, was forgotten, and in peace the Professor and I dreamed our separate dreams—one of a land where no woman had been dearer than Jeanne d'Arc—one where no sweeter love were more obscure than mine!

Gare St. Lazar! A strange tongue, but no florists' booths, only one boot-blacking parlor; and soda water and chewing gum noticeable for their absence.

And then the street.

"So this is Paris!"

Then the trembling sets in . The pit of the stomach turns cold. For the first time one realizes what one has done. "Great God what have I done!" and then on its heels, "Great God how am I going to do it!"

Somehow I thought of Mount Olivet and of the lime trees, of some religion that had been waiting for my belief, and I asked the professor if there were any mountain crucifixes in France.

"A few, perhaps," he said "but you are thinking of the Tyrol." I recognized that I had been thinking of the Tyrol,—that my lack of knowledge of the ground of the world was going to get me into not only practical but sentimental troubles.

I found myself waiting for the flow of French to cease, for the French children at least to stop the game (somehow one expects the children to be on one's side) for something a little more probable to happen. It took me several days to get over the sensation of dangerous make-believe, and as a matter of fact I am not yet quite sure that a Frenchman is not gaming when he talks to me, and I am almost ready to swear

that the Bon Marchè is a fraud, and that the Louvre is a somewhat flawless production of something French.. The feeling continued so long that, in the end, I asked a friend of mine, encountered later, if he did not experience a like sensation.

He answered that he did, that he was always smiling to himself, as much as to say, "You can begin to be authentic as soon as you like."

And so it was I came to Paris, and a few hours later was leaning out of my window in the Rue Jacob, and thinking in my heart of all unknown churches, and so thinking, I put on my cloak and went out to Notre Dame in the sad, falling twilight, and wandered under the trees and thought of another city, in a truly traitorous fashion, until, coming upon an old woman selling oranges, I thought how bitter and quick the odor was, and how charmingly unnecessary it was of them to be like that—and on this unnecessity I came into my own.

But Notre Dame somehow leaves you comparatively untouched, you may not remember her for fear of intruding. She is a lonely creature by preference. She is not disturbed by those devotees who fall into two classes; those going toward, and those coming from, faith. She is in the centre condition, where there is no going and no coming. Perhaps this is why, for me, there was something more possible in the church of Saint Germain des Pres, the oldest church in Paris. It is a place for those who have "only a little while to stay"—It too is aloof, but it has the aloofness of a woman loved by one dog and many men. And here one takes one's tears, leaving them unshed, to count the thin candles that rise about the feet of the Virgin like flowers on fire.

Coming from this church one evening I stopped a moment at the cafe of the "Deux Magots" and had a glass of wine, while Joyce, James Joyce, author of the suppressed "Ulysses," talked of the Greeks.

A quiet man, this Joyce, with the back head of an African idol, long and flat. The back head of a man who had done away with the vulgar necessity of brain-room.

He spoke, too, of Moore "The Playboy of the Western world," he said, sipping his Black and White. He went on to speak of Yeats. "A good boy and a fine poet, but too proud in his clothes, and too fond of the aesthetic—as for the rest of them - - - Irish stew! They don't even know that Gaelic is not the tongue of Dublin!"

At another time, walking under an umbrella, he mentioned Synge, but not before he had taken a smell of the damp air.

"A great lump of a man who could not be argued with. It is said that he was a silent man, but he was not. I always disliked his 'Riders'. I was the first person he showed it to, and I told him, then, to make a lasting argument —or to make none."

"'But,' he protested, 'it's a good play, as good as any one-act play can be.' And it was then that I said that Ireland needed less small talk and more irrefutable art; and that no one-act play, be it as good as its master, could be a knock-down argument."

He smiled as he said this, showing those strangely spoiled and appropriate teeth.

Joyce lives in a sort of accidental

aloofness. He is pleased when friends call, and he will go anywhere, it is said, and drink anything. He dislikes art-talk, and his friends are quite the common people.

His chief topic is Greek mythology, and he never tires of telling of the origin of Orion's name, information that would seem very shocking to the most scholastic mind, for he makes the Greeks 'naughty boys,' and leaves them shaking hands, across the gulf, with Rabelais.

He drifts from one subject to the other, making no definite division. Presently one finds that he has come from the origin of Greek names to a certain Baroness called by the French "La Sirene."

His memory is said to be perfect (I had little chance to find out) and it has some of the slow dragging quality of an inland mist. "An old woman she was," he said speaking of this Baroness, "past seventy, and with the palsy. She was a Russian, a woman of wealth, and very lovely as a girl, but it was as an old lady that I saw her, nodding her head over a trunk full of pornographic plates. 'These I want you to have,' she said to me, 'they were collected thoughout many years of a roving, dissatisfied life, the life of a lover of mine, a Greek.' "And with the word "Greek" I knew why Joyce had remembered her at all.

"She told me," Joyce continued, "that the hardest thing for a handsome woman is to look back over the past and 'it without legend'."

"But I did not write her story," he said suddenly, turning his black and red beard under the light. "It was too extraordinary, and a writer should never write about the extraordinary, that is for the journalist."

He went on, "She showed me the picture of her lover, the photograph hung at the foot of her bed, a fine fellow, with a black clipped beard and a wild look under the skin of his face."

Later Joyce explained why this woman was called "La Sirene."

"She had two islands off the Cretan coast, and there seven husbands were tearlessly buried, it is said, though she only admitted three to me. There was a rumor about that she had some very fine engravings illustrating the Odyssey, and I wrote her that I would like to see them. She came across the water herself, standing up in the little boat, her dog beside her, a great hat of straw on her head, and when she was within hailing distance she called out to me that I was no Englishman, and I called back 'No, Irish'."

Here I stopped to think what the picture must have been, the Baroness coming across the water, standing straight on her two legs with her dog beside her, throwing defiance and observation at this sad tall Irishman who had come to see Ulysses.

"The pictures turned out badly after all," he said. "The sirens had never been in a wind at all, for their hair was as set as a German wig, and the sea was just appropriately watered. Only one of the lot was, to me, at all pleasing—one in which the artist had conceived Ulysses as being tired and so sitting down to draw bow."

My mind wandered a little, I looked out into the square and wondered if I would ever come to this cafe again.

Just how long it was before I realized that Joyce had been talking to me I do not know, but when I gave him my attention again he was in the middle of a

sentence whose conclusion was—"and that is how I missed seeing Tagore; another one of the world's misconceptions of the mystic. Because I had no evening clothes."

"One of the world's misconceptions of the mystic!" This ran about in my head a while and got mixed in, some way or other, with Joyce's next observation, that opals in iron were very fine finger rings and that he liked heavy perfumes. but one in particular, though he never used scent, the name I think, was appopynax, and here I lost all connection with this man, sad, quiet, and eternally at work.

The chic of Paris, the beauty of its women, the magic of its very existence—

One woman, turning the corner of the Place Vendome, which takes a fine curve into the Ritz and the bank of Morgan Harges, seen in the evening, was chic. Another hurrying down the Rue de la Paix, was handsome, but as I passed her I heard her saying to the man with the spectacles, who had her by the elbow: "We have underestimated American plumbing." And it was said without a touch of accent, either Oxford or Boston.

The French woman is small, high hipped and amusingly dark, her thoughts are local, and her husband is minute and physically fit, apparently, only in reminiscence.

But, I was told, I should not come to Paris in the summer weather, that Deauville and Djinar had the beauties and that the real French chic was only to be seen in carriages with drawn blinds; that I must never hope to know the Frenchman, as he lives, unless I could perform that most delicate of international relationships—the stranger past the threshold.

"Even little Madame Bovary would not have let you in at the gate, unless some good local clergyman had sent you, or unless you had the look of a great lover."

I have perhaps a little of this look, but I was not going to risk it on a sleeping country, so I ate my breakfast of cognac and coffee with an occasional crescent (much better ones can be had any morning at the Brevoort) alone, until it occurred to the Professor, who had once been wealthy, and still had friends with tenacious memories, that an introduction to a French family might amuse me, and do the family no little pleasure, for, as he says, my laughter is made up of the precarious moments in the life of man.

The pension on the Rue de Grenelle seemed cold and dark and what one might call 'set aside,' and I found myself stepping out of the carriage with a feeling probably no less vital than that felt by Anna Karenine when the Moscow express turned the fatal corner. Drawing my cloak about me, I stood in the chill of the court, with shadows on my high cheek bones no less rich, deep and mysterious than a Rembrandt's..

The Professor began whispering as he ascended:

"She is a fine woman. One of those women who have a definite procedure of the figure; a middle aged woman, wife of the nation's most remarkable obstetrical surgeon——" he trailed off as the door to Madame's salon opened.

How many years of my life had gone into picturing just such a room! Deep

curtains of an exquisite and terrible baby blue, shut out the sunlight, in just proportion to the sun, trailing tassels of silver in the shadows. On the satin-covered walls hung hundreds of gilt frames, in which winsome women, of an earlier age, put up their back hair for someone, and still others half disclosed such busts as are dreamed of only by starved lithographers. These busts, garnished with a pressure of lace no more obtrusive than lashes on an eyelid, met the dying sunset more than half way.

Here were porcelains, too, vieing with each other for the supreme delicacy; little china women putting forth feet of such a ferocious tenuity that I was afraid to breathe my admiration; lace petticoats so sheer, so perforated and so unbelievable that I could almost see through to reality; and as for the hands holding the outer skirt at just the right height—well, I have always wanted to found a religion for the appropriate acknowledgement of the tiny.

In the centre of this room stood a hand-painted spinnet; that instrument which comes nearest to breaking my heart, unless I except the music box. Over this spinnet a heavy embroidery was thrown, with the ennui of a progressive sophistication. Three times in my life, no more I think, have musical instruments been either covered or uncovered in such a way as to change my life. Once it was done toward evening and once toward morning, and once in this French home, and I think that this time in Paris was for me, shall I say, my last affair with arrangements in music and silk.

Over it hung the silence that is in one's heart for all women who have come in and out of boudoirs to no end but the grave, and have done it so bravely, with lace and scent and timely fashions of all sorts, running on satin slippers which left the heel at every step. Here, too, was that silence, while we waited for Madame who stood somewhere, drawing a long stopper out of a crystal bottle, while her canary pecked his way around a golden cage.

Then Madame parted the curtains.

In her ears pendants swung, and because her exotic life could have no other outlet than her hands, ears and throat, she had dressed her throat in lace, high, to the ears, remembering the Divine Sarah; and on her hands there were many, many rings.

But she sat badly, not one foot before the other, as I had hoped she would, but with both legs at an even angle, the instep at flood-tide.

She talked a very pretty French, however, holding her head on one side, for she had a profile of a still insubordinate beauty, and an arrangement of mirrors proved someone in the household conscious of it.

Here were all those "differences" one craves in a "same" life; the bad taste, the restraint where one least expected it, the abandon in every day matters, the very way in which the street was shut out, the way the sunlight was let in, the way that Madame held her head, the fact too, that her husband, a little graying man with sharp eyes and beard, stood in the exact centre of a white fur rug, and placed his hands one against the other, as if they held the secret of his success in mutual reticence.

Nor was this all. The daughter, a child in her very early teens, was called up from her own salon on the second

floor, where she had been entertaining the younger obstetrical generation, just to shake hands with "the pretty foreigner."

A child with dark hair braided, drawn back, and fastened with discreet bows of black satin,— a very baby in short skirts, who nevertheless laughed heartily when her mother told a rather naughty war story, involving an attack on the family virtue, and who spoke of international matters with a very personal twinkle in her eyes, finally showing me to the door with the remark, in charming English:

"I hope you will suffer prettily in Paris." Though I am sure she was much too young to know how astute the words were.

"Were they not adorable?" the Professor asked, and I said that they were, but I was thinking, should I ever come in contact with children still in their malicious years, I would give them no legend of Paris, unless I could be assured, on someone's dying word, that they would never be permitted to visit France.

"Here," the Professor of Romance Languages said, "vorticism, free verse and all this modern riff-raff, needs no expression. Our city is paved with good intentions, with this difference— the citizen fulfills them at every step."

All life must be earned, or as our aunts would say, paid for, and the life of the Frenchman seems to have received precarious wages, for while they consider it very smart to copy the American, they have, at the same time, all the air of people who are under the delusion that, sooner or later, the copy will have to be returned.

Walking down the Boulevard St. Germain one evening with the Professor, I said that the multiplication of Paris had been its destruction, and when he asked me what I meant, I said that too many people had reported Paris,—it had the fame of a too beautiful woman. One should never come within hailing distance of beauty in women, cities or religion.

"We have too many thousands of opinions to discard, and in the event of the inevitable discard too much goes. There is hardly a shred left."

"But," said the Professor, "does the historical mean nothing to you? Take Napoleon's tomb, for instance, does that bring nothing up in your imagination?" and I said "That is like shooting cannon off over a lake choked with corpses, no one corpse dares take the call, so all of them lie still under the dragging."

"Well, the garden of the Luxembourg——"

I said that it was all that I had imagined, but not quite what I had hoped.

"But surely the most lovely gardens in the world are the gardens of the Tuileries?"

I said that perhaps they were if the search were after pure beauty, not association, and I added, "I must have my little association, being a woman."

"Well, then," he said, "what of the bird market, the flower market, and the markets as described by Zola?"

I answered him that the flower market left me comparatively cold. "For once," I said, "I had a friend to whom I sent flowers, and now that I may send them no more, flowers have become for me things I shall not think about," and I added that the bird market filled me with unassuagable emotions. I wanted to have five frail girl friends to send

them to. Five little girls who should sit in a row with closed eyes and hands open, to receive five perch-crowding linnets. And failing this I should have liked to send five little pies to five dying queens, each pie the grave of some melancholy swallow, or red-breasted thrush, and to have the death-bed word rise from among the falling of yellow feathers.

"And, as for the vegetable markets and the markets where fish, and livers, and brains lie in pools of cold and lovely blood, all these things I may not think about at all, for no lesser eye than the eye of the Master should be placed upon them again. Once a vegetable has been done justice, it needs neither after thought nor forethought, and should be eaten as unintentionally as possible."

"But the historic flower woman—" the Professor said, returnng.

"Ah," said I, "that is just the trouble, they have not renewed their history for at least eighty years it seems to me, and as for the flowers themselves, down to the oppressive pink, they have all enjoyed a past before you can pay the fifty centimes asked."

"What of our theatres?"

I answered that I found the theatres very dull, neither naughty nor nude. "You can get down to all that your mother gave you and still leave me utterly unconvinced of the existence of nudity," I added for emphasis. "As for the naughty French joke," I continued, "perhaps I am in the seventh cycle of existence, for certainly I have found that I anticipate better than others conclude."

"But the Folies Bergère?"

I said that it made me a trifle sad to discover American songs in European conceptions of the foolish, and that the Elsie Janis number gave me a strong sensation of sinking on my own ship in someone else's pond.

The Professor returned to me. "Well, all that may be very true, but think what a Frenchman feels when he goes to America and finds every actress, over forty, attempting the French manner of making love."

I said: "I should think you would suffer in a big, international way."

He said: "No, it isn't suffering exactly, it's a sort of unrequited hate."

We walked on a while in silence. Coming into the lower end of the city, where the shadow of Notre Dame makes all filth and despair holy, we paused. In the darkness of the quai a middle-aged woman worked on a mattress, and nearer at hand, one dishevelled man shaved another, dipping the rusty razor into a shallow bowl of dark water, resting on the steps leading up into the outer world.

The Professor was wiping his moustache with an immaculate handkerchief and he was saying, "As for those theatres you know, they always take out the gestures during the hot season——"

But I was thinking of the two old men who shaved one another while the world went by, for after all, men's hair will grow in spite of the Peace treaty and the fight for Irish rule.

The Professor told me that the French people do all precarious things beside the Seine, from science to love, and those things touching the conscience are all committed within stone's throw of Our Lady, because its proximity is an eternal and unsolicited forgiveness.

When the Professor had returned to me I asked him who bought the books

which are for sale at a centime or so, all along the quai, and he said:

"American playwrights writing bedroom farces; authors describing Ohio women taking their stays off, and all poets trying to discover a reason for prose."

"And the swords and fire arms?"

"Those," he said, "are bought by middle-aged women from Connecticut, who have suffered too much from the lack of targets——"

"And the medals?"

"Those," he replied, after a moment's smiling silence," are bought by boys in their early teens, who have pictured Napoleon as having a different physique."

Then he asked me a question: "What do you think of our shops?"

"The Bon Marchè, the Galerie Lafayette, Printemps, the Louvre—" I shrugged, "horrible, like our worst stores on a half-holiday."

He answered, "Of course, no really smart Frenchwoman thinks of going to such places—she goes to the small, exclusive shops. Paquin, for instance."

I said that the French gowns made up by Paquin were very beautiful, but I added: "They take the place of our vestments for holy orders, they do not seem to be for the general public."

"Isn't there anything you like?" he queried.

"Oh yes, I like the serious way you take your perfumes, powders, rouges, cosmetics of all sorts, and I like your cafes, and I like your early Italians and their dwindled Christs and Madonnas, and I like your churches, as I have said, and I like the way you walk, men especially, with a certain respect for the way their legs are fastened on—we Americans walk too much from the knee—and I like Cluny."

At this point, having bought a package of those colored crystal candies that the French do better than almost anything else, I told him how I had loved Cluny until, walking through its corridors, and up and down its staircases, and looking into its boxes of old lace and boots of a past generation, I had called out "Ou est Thais?" and called ceaselessly, until the guard was quite convinced that I had gone mad, and directed me to the room where the irons are kept that never really eased any husband's anxiety when he went off to battle. I looked at the armour and the firearms and the pottery and the saddles, and I turned away with the cry still in my heart.

For I was told, I said, by a little boy in New York, that in one museum or other, there lay the body of the most beautiful woman,—brief of flesh and of legend immortal, and that I had come to Paris more on her account than she on mine, and herein lay my pleasure and my pain.

"I did not know that she was a person," the Professor said, "I thought she was a hope and a despair."

I said that she had been all three, and there followed a long discussion into which were drawn three gendarmes and two citizens, all of them more or less certain that no such thing as a tangible keepsake was left of this lovely creature, who had that swiftness which is beyond men's passions and their tears.

"But we have the most lovely bric-a-brac," said the guard, and I, answering that I did not doubt him, went out through the gardens, where half destroyed satyrs and virgins lie among

the long grass, as unmolested as the dead, for children and nurse maids play about them with a reverence that needs no civic reminder.

"Have you been up to the Montmartre?"

Ah, yes, I had been upon its ceaseless little hills, and one night I had dined there with a young man of the more serious type, who had insisted on dragging Edith Wharton and Ezra Pound into the conversation.

I did not want to listen to him, I liked looking at the dark dragon who kept the place, a heavy woman with that very French gesture on her upper lip—a moustache—and who brought what we should have ordered and didn't, hoping it was what we liked and shouldn't.

But like most places—which the foreigner can easily find—it was spoiled by women speaking English to men who answered in American.

After this I had gone to "Hell," a cafè in the fashion of the infernal regions—as it would have been conceived by a man suffering from an inferiority complex—where nothing more devilish was committed during the whole evening, than an act in which St. Peter kissed the Golden Calf inappropriately, and where a lady without a "stitch to her name," whirled around and around on a plate, throwing a reflection of the performance in a dimmed mirror, while the urban and the suburban put their hands, at arm's length, between their knees and roared.

After this I had gone to the Bal Tabarin with still another young man, who had wanted me to be his asterisk, and here I became much infatuated with the back of a lady's neck.

Ah, that neck! It rose out of her body like some fine pillar and took a gracious curve into a head of a miraculous pale gold, and the cheek of the face, turning a little this way and that, was as doll-pink as a painting by Demuth, and when she turned full sideways, the nose took up the curve of the throat and descending in an elipse, swept under suddenly into a mouth of feline softness.

Perhaps none of this happened at all, perhaps it was what I hoped. Be that as it may, all vanished when this lady smiled. She smiled up into the face of her beery partner (more beer is drunk in Paris than in Berlin) a man I had not seen for the charm of what I thought she was going to be, and all was over, for I discovered that the whole front of her mouth was done in oblivious gold, and then, too, I noticed that the real lace handkerchief in her thin hand was very soiled, that she spoke in some terrible Cockney dialect, and a moment later was to be seen sitting at the bar on a high stool, one leg thrust down at the floor, like a withered pile in thin water.

Women in European theatricals do not know how to dance, I had found that out, and this woman who had betrayed me with a miraculous neck, and her stout partners were to utterly convince me.

These three women were scheduled to do an interpretative dance. They came together around a pan of resin, stamping their feet in the powder (much as hens in a scrap bin) leaning over to flex their ankles. The two stout ones had been sitting across the room, looking exactly like Tweedledee and Tweedledum, with a sham bottle of champagne leaning sideways in a pail

of imitation ice, the right foot of each placed against the arch of the left, a look of pleasant malice upon their faces.

They kicked a little, it is true, but they showed only very soiled frills, with a vanishing point in cotton, and when they turned around, they turned with a peculiar slowness, having no connection with the music whatsoever, and when they did not like the music sufficiently they did not dance at all, standing in whatever forlorn attitude the last pleasing chord had left them in, 'till they came upon another more to their taste.

But no, it cannot be adequately described. How many times I have tried to do it for my Greenwich Village friends (who can always be found at the Rotonde in the afternoons) and have failed.

So I seem to come at last, to the end of my Paris days, and yet something stays in my mind and worries me, like a squirrel in a cage; something that whirls about and about and would be told.

Is it the story of the chambermaid in the Rue Jacob perhaps? she who brought me my breakfast every morning, holding one of those stiff little brooms under her arm, pressed close to her firm breast.

I had many a difficult hour with this young woman—she could not have been more than twenty-five—for she was full of vigor and pleasant fancies, but fortunately for the still able generation, she had to work very hard, and could be found any morning sitting up on the landing, polishing away at huge boots belonging to French and American officers, and as she polished she kept crying between excellent teeth: *"Toujours travaille!"*

Or is it the story of L. L—— the young man from the Swiss mountains, who took me to lunch one day and wept over his lobster, dropping "mots" on the sadness of life and the instability of women, while in between claws he told of an affair he had cooked up between a senile princess and her chimney sweep.

Or it is that hour between the two when I set out to find a Norwegian bracelet for a very small friend of mine, only to come upon despair, for the Paris evening is filled with the sound of young men turning somersaults on the sidewalks, and children trying not to grow out of their clothes before they can get around the corner and home, and a slow haze, while at regulated intervals, water can be heard dripping, dripping, dripping.

And I say to myself, shall I tell the world what Paris meant to me, or shall I let it sit in its clubs, and its libraries and its homes with Mark Twain and Arthur Symons on its knee, and such desultory sketches as may have fallen from the reeking pens of women, while learning all that Americans failed to notice, on some garden urn?

I do not know.

The insect can fly but ten paces, but in the tail of a noble steed he can go a thousand miles.—*From the Mongolian.*

Locutions Des Pierrots

Translated from the French of Jules Laforgue

By HART CRANE

I

Your eyes, those pools with soft rushes,
O prodigal and wholly dilatory lady,
Come now, when will they restore me
The orient moon of my dapper affections?

For imminent is that moment when,
Because of your perverse austerities,
My crisp soul will be flooded by a languor
Bland as the wide gaze of a Newfoundland.

Ah, madame! truly it's not right
When one isn't the real Gioconda,
To adaptate her methods and deportment
For snaring the poor world in a blue funk.

II

Ah! the divine infatuation
That I nurse for Cydalise
Now that she has fled the capture
Of my lunar sensibility!

True, I nibble at despondencies
Among the flowers of her domain
To the sole end of discovering
What is her unique propensity!

—Which is to be mine, you say?
Alas, you know how much I oppose
A stiff denial to postures
That seem too much impromptu.

III

Ah! without the moon, what white nights,
What nightmares rich with ingenuity!
Don't I see your white swans there?
Doesn't someone come to turn the knob?

And it's your fault that I'm this way.
That my conscience sees double,
And my heart fishes in troubled water
For Eve, Gioconda and Dalila.

Oh, by the infinite circumflex
Of the archbeam of my cross-legged labours,
Come now—appease me just a little
With the why-and-wherefore of Your Sex!

Euthanasia

By ALLEN TATE

No more the white refulgent streets,
Never the dry gutters of the mind,
Shall he in hellish boredom walk
Again, for death is not unkind.

The graceless madness of her lips,
Who was the powder-puff of life,
Cannot rouge those cheeks nor warm
His cold corpuscles back to strife.

What did he gain? What did he lose?
These questions for the pious dead
Are blown from bosoms of kind souls—
A scented sorrow, corseted.

High up above our busy heads,
Busied with gullets gorging dimes,
We raise him to a grinning sky,
Shouting his praise a hundred times.

China and Its Poetry: Interpretations

By EMILY Z. FRIEDKIN

THE impression that Chinese poetry is exotic is well-founded; but it is also false. The translations which have attempted to acquaint us with Chinese verse are responsible for this erroneous idea which grew out of a compulsion felt, for some occult reason, by the translating poets, to embroider with chrysanthemums things Chinese. So we had Judith Gautier's French versions which were the probable source of E. Powys Mather's "Colored Stars," and L. Cranmer-Byng's "Lute of Jade," and "Feast of Lanterns." Add to these titles the new volume by Amy Lowell, "Fir Flower Tablets," and you have every reason in the world for believing that Chinese poetry has in it the quintessence of exoticism.

But Witter Bynner's translations are at once a refutation and a rescue. Reading them is reassurance that Chinese poems are not fantastic, bizarre bits of verse concocted of color, trickery and pretty conceits; on the contrary, they are essentially simple. Mr. Bynner says that, of our English poets, Wordsworth approaches most nearly the Chinese because both are concerned not with romantic love, which is momentary, but with the lasting sadness of life and with reverence for nature. It is, then, the stuff of life which concerns the Chinese, rather than "the stuffs of life" which, as a critic once commented, interested Amy Lowell. Although Miss Lowell's work ranks above the older translations, it, too, is inflated with much color. But it is chiefly the efforts of previous interpreters which have fostered impressions difficult to eradicate; indeed, so effectual has been their wrong-planting and nurturing that even such magazines as the *Atlantic* and *Century* rejected Mr. Bynner's poems from the Chinese on the ground that they were "too foreign, too exotic to interest the western reader."

The task of overcoming this tradition can be shown by comparing the Bynner translation of "A Song of the Palace" and Mather's earlier variation of it. Mr. Bynner gives it to us in four lines:

> The palace gate quietly closes on flowers;
> Ladies file out to a terrace of jade,
> Their lips abrim with imperial gossip
> Which they dare not utter because of a parrot.

Mather tells it this way:

> What rigorous calm. What almost holy silence!
> All the doors are shut, and the beds of flowers are giving out scent; discreetly, of course...
> Two women that lean against each other stand on the balustrade of red marble on the edge of the terrace.
> One of them wishes to confide to her friend the secret sorrow that is agonizing her heart.
> She throws an anxious glance at the motionless leaves, and because of a paroquet with iridescent wings that perches on a branch, she sighs and is silent.

There are other examples quite as glaring but this illustration seems sufficient elucidation that the former efforts to make Chinese poetry intelligible suc-

ceeded only in clothing it, gorgeously, perhaps; garishly, surely. In reading Mr. Bynner's work, which is as yet uncollected in book form, there is, at times, the feeling that he tends to the other extreme; in striving to transfer the simplicity, the economy of the original, he gives us something too elliptical, something, only very occasionally, even precious. But always he avoids investing his versions with intentional and inartistic quantities of splendor. Such a burdening and elaborate manner is unfaithful to the content and form of the Chinese poems.

In content the Chinese poetry differs, chiefly, from our own in that it contains "wisdom uncommon among us, while ours has the emotions common to any of us." The reader may find the Chinese poetry single-tracked, repetitious in content, but in truth the Chinese poets are less limited and more wise in their selection of themes surrounding friendship, philosophy and nature than are our English poets in their preoccupation with the emotions of youth. On the other hand, it is a mistake to allow a cursory consideration to confirm the impression that the Chinese are only as we know them with their masks of immobility and suspicion, and as a sombre, suppressed people. Mr. Bynner found, during his sojourn in China, that, when approached with sympathy and decency, the Chinese reveal themselves as Latin in temperament—jovial and demonstrative. And by way of illustration, timely and not heavily facetious, let me give you "A Reminder to My Friend Liu" by Po Chü yi:

There's a gleam of green in an old bottle,
There's a stir of red in the quiet stove,
There's a feeling of snow in the dusk outside—
Is it yes to a cup of wine inside?

Mr. Bynner read me another poem from his manuscript; it is a "drinking song" about "three hundred bowls one long drink"; but I cannot give it here. It is, I think, still "for sale." (Don Marquis please note.)

In short, then, for a variety of reasons which familiarity negates, we have known the Chinese and their poetry only as "queer." There is little new in the mutual dubbing of "outlandish" and "exotic" of unaccustomed things; indeed, Mr. Bynner was asked, why do all Americans look alike; why have all American women frog eyes; why do you walk into the house with your shoes on, like a dirty dog?

"The West has always felt that Christ's affirmative admonition to altruism, 'And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise,' is superior to the older but negative statement of Confucius," a young Chinese student remarked to Mr. Bynner on an occasion. "But if I loved a girl and she didn't love me, Christ would say, 'Kiss her'; but Confucius would say, 'No'."

"And I think Confucius would be the better guide," is Mr. Bynner's comment.

One of the astounding things about China is its vitality—China, which we have been told, from time back, is crumbling... The Chinese themselves explain this paradox by another; we are the only people, they say, who have ever retained rational maturity without losing the child. Mr. Bynner finds all of this spirit in their poetry, in the short poems particularly, where the sound stops, but where the sense goes

on, as in "But O my friends, will you come back?" and in

> As I walk in the cool of the autumn night,
> Thinking of you, singing my poem,
> And hear a mountain pine-cone fall—
> You also seem to be awake.

There is nothing in these poems to attract the ordinary reader for they quicken rather than lull the intelligence; neither is there anything in the simple, pregnant verse suggestive of "colored stars" or lantern feasts, or of "fir flower tablets." They are austere and restrained—not turgid and florid. The pretty trappings of art have faded before the substance, the essence of art. For the fancy of the West the Chinese have substituted imagination; and this, Mr. Bynner points out, is evidenced in the preference of poetry to painting. "The Chinese will say to you, 'There is the moonlight of the stream reflected in my room. What painting could give you that?' "

And for this exquisite picture we are indebted to Miss Lowell:

> In front of my bed the moonlight is very bright,
> I wonder if that can be frost on the floor?

Another characteristic of the Chinese poets is their careless consideration, in comparison with that of some of our poets, of the plumbing; further, in their imagery they use the metaphor sparingly.

The anthology from which Mr. Bynner translated his poems is a compilation of those from the sixth to the ninth centuries — China's golden age of poetry; it is an anthology more widely-known in China than any English collection among us. Mr. Bynner's work was done in association with Dr. Kiang Kang-hu, poet and publicist, in somewhat the manner Miss Lowell collaborated with Florence Ayscough.

On the surface this Mr. Bynner of the Chinese translations appears a very different man from his pseudo-self, Emanuel Morgan, who got away with a clever hoax. "You're the man who put over the 'Spectric' school of poetry, aren't—"

He interrupted me with his smile, and then said, "Amy Lowell asked me whether there really was such a poet as Liu Fang-p'ing."

So, Mr. Bynner has much to live down—the tradition that Chinese poetry is exotic, for which he is in nowise responsible, and his own earlier escapades. It is difficult to forgive him for "The Tiger" which was a serious piece of work—too serious; but I shall always be grateful to the man who gave us those intense inanities which those seeking—O so hard!—the too-too things of and out of life worshipped as devout votaries. One of those "poems" has lodged in my memory:

> The look in your eye
> Was as soft as the underside of the soap
> in the soapdish...
> And I left before you could love me.

But the poet's playing with the seemingly esoteric and exotic is of the past. The thing of the moment is his work with the Chinese pearls of poetry. And that is of the future, too.

He who rides a tiger is afraid to dismount.—*Chinese Proverb.*

Beth Marie

By WILLIAM ALEXANDER PERCY

Impatiently she drew her breath,
  So new was life, so wild:
But patiently she waited death
  And when he touched her, smiled.

She who had never wished to die,
  Who had such fear of pain,
Was tranquil as an evening sky
  That flowers from spent rain.

For us her loss was different
  From all we could suppose:
The calm of spartan stars she lent
  Who only seemed a rose.

An Old Man Dreams

By WALTER McCLELLAN

There's beauty in the mind
Beyond the moment's glow:
In the mind of an old man
The eighteen-eighties flow
In beauty of racing horses,
Young bawds have beauty where
His memories are blown
As leaves upon the air.
Oh passionately he would be
His own young self and stream
Out of the house of his mind
And out of an old man's dream—
And now he is at the door
When leaves all suddenly curl
To the round of a bitter mouth
And the bitter eyes of a girl.

A Divine Gesture

By ERNEST M. HEMINGWAY

AND then when all was come and gone, the Great Lord God strode out of the house and into the garden, for in the garden he found the deep peace of Rome. Bathtubs stood all around in heavy earnestness. Boot jacks littered the Garden. A thousand broken flower pots were piled into one corner.

"Where is Adam?" asked the Lord God.

No one answered for all the flower pots were tired and none of the bathtubs remembered it was Sunday.

"Where is Eve?" asked the Lord God, pulling at his beard and looking remarkably like Tolstoi.

At once all the boot jacks began to leap and chatter and a flight of blackbirds swooped down into the garden and commenced to strut around, exploring into the flower pots with their beautiful shining bills.

"She is gone out, God," said the largest and weakest bathtub in a heavily earnest manner, "and no man can prophecy the hour of her returning. But I would say that she would return around four o'clock."

The Great Lord God made a divine motion with his hand and the angel Gabriel came swiftly forward from where he had been sitting and let all the water out of the largest and weakest of the bathtubs.

"That would teach him a valuable lesson," remarked the angel Gabriel, and God nodded to him in an absent-minded and approving manner.

"It should," meditated the great Lord God, "and more valuable lessons is what we need in this day and age."

As there seemed nothing more for the angel Gabriel to say and as the water was quite run out of the largest and weakest of the bathtubs, he smiled quietly at God and walked carefully back to his corner, treading cautiously as he went in order not to step on any of the boot jacks which were curling and uncurling in an alarming manner.

"Stop it!" shouted the great Lord God, and at once every boot jack was still. "How often have I told you not to continue that loathsome habit?"

One boot jack nudged another and soon they were all nudging one another and whispering, "We mustn't squirm today. We mustn't squirm to-day. Hy ya ta did eeyay. We mustn't squirm to-day!"

In a little while from whispering the words had changed into a chant and all the boot jacks were squirming more than ever and chanting at the top of their voices, "We mustn't squirm today. We mustn't squirm today. Hy Yah Ta Did Esay! We mustn't squirm today!"

"Stop it!" shouted the Great Lord God in a terrible voice.

All the boot jacks were very frightened and then in a few moments one said in a frightened but eager voice, "Why mustn't we squirm today God?"

"I'm busy!" said God in a terrible voice. "I'm busier than ever!"

All the boot jacks commenced nudging one another and saying, "He's busier than ever. That's why we mustn't squirm today." But in a few moments they had forgotten why they were nudging one another and were all chanting and squirming, "We mustn't squirm today."

God strode away in disgust, making a divine gesture to the angel Gabriel who followed him quietly out of the garden..

"No peace," said the Great Lord God as they strode rapidly up the long stairs, "no peace anywhere. I'm so busy, and there is only twenty-four hours in a day."

"Are twenty-four hours, perhaps you mean, Sire," quietly said the angel Gabriel.

"Is twenty-four hours, I said," the Great Lord God corrected in a sad tone, for he was very fond of the angel Gabriel.

The angel Gabriel smiled uncertainly and followed God up the long stairs, thinking of his wife and children.

"I am sure there is only twenty-four hours," he said, panting a little from the stairs.

"My good and faithful servant," God said fondly, for he was very fond of the angel Gabriel, "I'm so very busy."

So they sat down for a little while and far below them could hear the sound of the boot jacks squirming and chanting.

"What is that sound?" asked God, for like many other leaders he was very deaf at times.

"Your faithful boot jacks, Sire," answered the angel Gabriel quietly, but very distinctly.

"Ah, yes," God mused happily, "my faithful boot jacks."

Resignation

By JAMES FEIBLEMAN

My love was not a sudden one,
  Capricious as the vagrant breeze.
I pray like a Mohammedan;
Silent at dawn, before the sun
  Upon my knees.

I was not taken unaware
  Without a vestige of defense.
There was, about the secret air,
An intimation of despair
  For recompense.

Reviews

NEW POEMS OF EZRA POUND

Poems, 1918-21, *including Three Portraits and Four Cantos, by Ezra Pound.* (*Boni and Liveright.*)

"Shades of Callimachus, Coan ghosts of Philetas
It is in your grove I would walk,
I who come first from the clear font
Bringing the Grecian orgies into Italy, and the dance into Italy.
Who hath taught you so subtle a measure, in what hall have you heard it;
What foot beat out your time-bar, what water has mellowed your whistles?"

SO begins the "Homage to Sextus Propertius," first division of this book, "Poems 1918-21," which contains much subtle and beautiful writing and much that seems to be foolish, or, at any rate, merely clever.

Mr. Pound, "the great international figure," once king of the refugees, Daniel Boone of the pioneers in cadence and harmony who have in a decade somewhat revolutionized English and American verse, seems in this volume to be fagged after many battles with the intricacies of language. He "yawns on his lyre" and produces out of an evident ennui verses which are distinctive for their subtleties of cadence and diction rather than for the clear gong-like tones of that earlier work which made him in a way the white hope of lovers of poetry. There are in "Poems 1918-21" too many twisted and perverted cadences and there is a great tincture of the macaronic in much of the work, especially in some of the poems in the "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" suite and in the almost impossibly wearisome "Cantos."

The brittleness or the extreme tautness of his rhymed stanzas with their bitter and sarcastic, sometimes whimsical inflections, suggest a jaded repartee or sophisticated small-talk rather than the art of poetry. A note of bitterness, of sarcasm and of ennui becomes more and more predominant in Mr. Pound's verse. He is becoming, it is to be feared, altogether too sour about matters which have been dismissed with a shrug even by artists who died in defense of beauty, like Poe and Gustavo Bécquer.

Mr. Pound seems to be growing explanatory and combative, taking more pleasure in swinging a nasty left in the ring of argumentation than in the creation of harmonies and images. He spins a great deal of occasional comment:

The age demanded an image
Of its accelerated grimace,
Something for the modern stage,
Not, at any rate, an Attic grace.

Not, not certainly, the obscure reveries
Of the inward gaze;
Better mendacities
Than the classics in paraphrase!

The "age demanded" chiefly a mould in plaster,
Made with no loss of time,
A prose kinema, not, not assuredly, alabaster
Or the "sculpture" of rhyme.

And here is an embittered notation (which is one of the best poems in the book):

There died a myriad,
And of the best, among them,
For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
For a botched civilization,

Charm, smiling at the good mouth,
Quick eyes gone under earth's lid,

For two gross of broken statues,
For a few thousand battered books.

He pens some extremely clever Heineesque stanzas here and there in the sophisticated, weary verses which make up so much of the volume. Here are two from "Medallion":

Luini in porcelain!
The grand piano
Utters a profane
Protest with her clear soprano.

The sleek head emerges
From the gold-yellow frock
As Anadyomene in the opening
Pages of Reinach.

But this yawning, blasé verse, subtle, strained, refined too far, is not what one expects of Mr. Pound. One recalls the clear bell-like tones of his earlier work, some of which are as beautiful as any in our literature and will float down past the generation perhaps long after "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" and *"Moeurs Contemporaines"* are forgotten.

There are many beautiful cadences, rhythms and harmonies in this volume. The clear singing note in its best passages is tempered with subtlety but is beautiful still, and many of the glib polysyllabic lines (where not too smirkingly clever) have that rare fluid beauty which we have come to associate with Mr. Pound's peculiar genius. The "Homage to Sextus Propertius" is rich in charming lines (despite the fact that certain of the inflections and curious rhythms threaten now and then to become as monotonous as "this is the forest primeval"). The following quotations have been chosen at random:

Happy who are mentioned in my pamphlets
the songs shall be a fine tombstone over their beauty

. . . . . .

Who has ordered a book about heroes?

. . . . . .

Since Adonis was gored in Idalia, and the Cytherean
Ran crying with out-spread hair,
In vain, you call back the shade,
In vain, Cynthia. Vain call to unanswering shadow.

. . . . . .

To-day we take the great breath of lovers.

. . . . . .

Persephone and Dis, Dis, have mercy upon her,
There are enough women in hell,
quite enough beautiful women.

And, in *"I Vecchii":*

They will come no more,
The old men with beautiful manners.

There are a dozen splendid lines in "Envoi (1919)".

And even in the "Cantos," which, with their pidgin jargon, are as dreary reading as anything since Browning, one finds phrasing like this:

(Sea-change, a grey in the water)

. . . . . .

The talks ran long in the night

and haunting, resonant passages like these:

And the great domed head *con gli occhi onesti e tardi*
Moves before me, phantom with weighted motion,
Grave incessu, drinking the tone of things,
And the old voice lifts itself
weaving an endless sentence.
We also made ghostly visits, and the stair
That knew us, found us again on the turn of it,
Knocking at empty rooms, seeking a buried beauty.

. . . . . .

And all that day
Nicea moved before me
And the cold gray air troubled her not
For all her naked beauty, bit not the tropic skin,
And the long slender feet lit on the curb's marge
And her moving height went before me,
We alone having being.

It would be absurd to assert that this book was not written by a poet of great capacities and that it does not contain a little of the best poetry now available in English. Both of these statements are, I believe, incontrovertible. Mr. Pound's position is secure. He has written some supremely beautiful verse. One believes that he will write more. But his effete sophistication is lamentable. One feels that many of the verses in this book are a sort of murmuring out of nightmare—a sort of patter indulged in by a man deeply disturbed by the fear of futility. "Poems, 1918-21" is a depressing volume. And one feels as one reads that Ezra Pound has lived too long abroad. In old civilizations the artist, surrounded by aesthetes, dies of ennui. One feels that Mr. Pound would be better off at home.

There is still adventure and peril in the defense or pursuit of beauty in this country.

JOHN MCCLURE.

MEMOIRS OF A MIDGET

Memoirs of a Midget, by Walter De la Mare. (Alfred A. Knopf.)

"MEMOIRS OF A MIDGET" is a book unlikely to win much favor with ordinary readers of fiction. The plot of its story is too nebulous and the rare character of its writing too remote and evasive. It is indeed the novel of a poet and of a poet the particular quality of whose verse has always been gossamer light and difficult for common mortals to apprehend.

The book purports to be written by the ego-centric Midget Miss M, a dainty and exquisitely formed infinitesimal little creature, whose destiny has been to be born into a world peopled by giant human beings. Her parents are ashamed of her, or at any rate afraid of letting her be seen and she spends the first years of her life hidden away at Lyndsey, a village somewhere in Kent. Her father, a benevolent if somewhat eccentric man, teaches her to play chess on a little board with pigmy men, but for all his concern about her happiness "he was apt," as she slyly remarks, "to lose interest in the game when it went against him."

She would spend many hours of each day sitting by a stream at the bottom of the garden where bindweed, goosegrass and travelers' joy grew in profusion and where as she sat on the flat ledge of her sun-warmed stone, butterflies, "uncoiling their delicate tongues," would drink from the dew-drops she had collected on the tips of her tiny fingers. From the first she possessed an intelligence philosophically inclined. She once came upon a dead mole in the grass and turning it over regarded quite undismayed the maggots in its belly! "Ah, ha! so this is what is in wait, this is how things are," she cried to herself On the evening of the auction held in the old home after the deaths of her parents, she lay, she tells us, in her diminutive bed "wondering how it was that we human beings can bear even to go on living between two such mysteries as the beginning and the end of life." The occasion must have been encouraging to such pale reflections for the loneliness of the house in that late summer evening, with thunder abroad over the Kentish "hundreds," is brought home to us most vividly by her writing, with the black beetles "those shelled

nocturnal sour-smelling creatures" creeping across the empty kitchen floor and the sound of the night-fowl screeching over the "soaked and tranquil harvest fields" coming into the hollow rooms from outside.

The shrewd observations of the simple, homely servants during those days that "floated into Eternity as softly as thistledown" remind one vaguely of Charles Dickens' world. "Oh, these men," exclaimed one of them, "they are never happy unless they can be where they b'aint."

After the disruption of her home Miss M takes up her abode in the house of Mrs. Bowater and this most excellent woman has a tiny doorway made in the lower panel of her own front door so as to render it easy for the midget whenever she had a will to go out. The midget held the key to this fairy exit and in the early mornings before the village folks were abroad, would scour the neighboring countryside. Her favorite haunt was "Wanderslore," an old forsaken country garden on the edge of a great wood with "a long, dark, many-windowed house standing in its midst." In the early summer dawns she visited the place, "concealing herself in the tussocks of grass" if she caught sight of a mortal and often enough "exchanging glances with an old vixen."

One day she says "a curious feeling came over me, familiar yet eluding remembrance. It meant that I must be vigilant." Her misgivings proved correct for on the occasion of her next visit suddenly "raising my eyes, I looked straight across at him, scowling there beneath his stunted thorn in a drift of flowers like fool's parsley." "Who are you watching me?" she called to the tiny hump-backed figure who approached "casting his crooked shadow away from the sun on the close-cropped turf." From that moment this little human drawf began "to creep into her imagination as easily as a single bee creeps into the thousand-celled darkness of its hive." The chance of her having met such a being did not surprise her much, for as she says prettily enough, "glow-worm will keep tryst with glow-worm in forests black as night." The two spent many days together loitering along the green-stained terraces" tufted with wall flowers and snapdragons" or pushing their way through "hale sour weeds, some of them shoulder high." There was nothing that they did not discuss, he with his "queer croaking yet captivating voice" and she with a tone "shrill as a bird on a quiet afternoon." They spoke of her body "a perishing flake of manna—a wren's picking merely," they spoke of the ghost of Cerencester, who vanished as the old book said, "with a curious perfume and most melodious twang" and of the Saviour of mortal men who was of such "a stature that well-nigh without stooping he could have laid his fingers on my head."

The story flags a little when the Midget is taken to London as a nine days' diversion for a fashionable woman. The further Mr. De La Mare wanders from the romantic sun and shadows of "Wanderslore" the less sure is his hand. But there is always an intriguing piquancy about the Midget's conversation. "We don't often see you at St. Peters, I think," says the Rev. Crimble. "You would not see very much of me if I did come," I replied a little tartly. "On the other hand," I added, "wouldn't there be a risk of the congregation seeing nothing else?"

The book contains quotations from

those two poems which have in them such strange imaginative power. Who can define or explain their romantic suggestiveness, almost terrible in its intensity to certain minds?

"This ae nighte, this ae nighte
—Every nighte and alle,
Fire and sleet and candle-light,
And Christe receive thy saule!"

"The moon's my constant mistress,
And the lovely owl my marrow;
The flaming drake,
And the night-crow, make
Me music to my sorrow."

And how delicate is the description of the spiritual awakening that came to the Midget from reading "Wuthering Heights" as the wind kept "trumpeting the smoke down the chimney" in her room under Mrs. Bowater's roof. "If in February you put a newly gathered sprig of budding thorn into the fire, instantaneously in the influence of the heat, it will break into bright green tiny leaf."

The book ends with tragedy. Mr. Anon, the dwarf, insists upon sharing with the Midget "the disgrace" of appearing at a circus, is thrown from his pony and injures his malformed back. She is outside the tent waiting for him when she hears the scream "human or animal, faint and awful." Together under a waning and misshapen moon they make their way towards "Wanderslore." "His hand sent a shiver down my back, it was so clammy and cold." She alone reached the garden and in a senseless hallucination that bespoke a mind distraught, "began systematically, laboriously, a friendly search. Leaf, pebble, crawling night-creature—with slow, animal-like care I turned them over, one by one, seeking and *seeking*."

LLEWELYN POWYS.

CIVILIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Civilization in the United States: An Inquiry, edited by Harold Stearns.

(*Harcourt, Brace and Company.*)

IT would be a hardy or impertinent critic who would pass on this book a judgment unattended by at least three saving qualifications as means of escape from thirty-three possibly irate authors. The diversity of subjects and of personalities treating them is sufficiently baffling to the specialist, as well as to the non-specialist, reviewer to promote a salutary humility among them. If, as Mr Stearns attempted so sturdily to prove, there were a unifying thread running through the volume, one could then follow the thread and ignore, to a greater or less degree, the essays pendant from them. But there is no such guide to facile comment. If it is true, as Anatole France declares, that "every book exists in as many different forms as it has readers," then it is particularly true of a book in the composition of which thirty-three critics, poets and commentators, many of them possessing highly individual tastes and turns, have collaborated.

All of which is not intended to mean that they are portentous or pretentious. These are individuals, not peas in a pod; they have written, not random essays, but compressed volumes into which enter the qualities of wit and wisdom, urbanity and grace, knowledge of facts and their adequate analysis. It is a fallacy even to marshal together these writers under one term: "intellectual co-operators" they may be, but they vary too distinctly from any genera

for light classification. It would be temptingly easy, for instance, to dilate on the differences and distinctions between such contributors as H. L. Mencken (on politics) and Raffaello Piccoli (on an Italian's view), Ring W. Lardner (on sport and play) and Van Wyck Brooks (on the literary life), Elsie Clews Parsons (on sex) and H. W. Van Loon on history).

This does not invalidate the book, it merely renders it more precious while making manifest the difficulty of any general appraisement that shall pretend to finality.

Although no common positive outlook binds together these essays, in many of them the negative note of dissatisfaction with the state of American civilization predominates. To our Puritan past (the past obsesses some moderns) which demanded a complete submission to the problem of "getting on" in the conquest of the continent and which subverted pure culture to the "pragmatic" uses of success do a number of these writers refer certain evils in our civilization. Explicit statements of this theory and recognizable overtones of it are given by Lewis Mumford (on the city), Robert M. Lovett (on education), Walter Pach (on art), Harold Stearns (on the intellectual life) and Van Wyck Brooks (on the literary life). Mr. Brooks puts it thus: "That old hostility of the pioneers to the special career still operates to prevent in the American mind the powerful, concentrated pursuit of any non-utilitarian way of life; meanwhile everything else in our society tends to check the growth of the spirit and to shatter the confidence of the individual in himself."

But if these men regarded the pioneer past as an absolute determinant of the present, then fault-finding, no matter of what degree of refinement, would take on the aspect of a quarrel with destiny. The mere fact that a group of this nature has published amplifications and extensions of its theories in books and magazines of a "reputable" nature, has founded and is editing publications that evoke respect, admiration and emulation and has awakened echoes in thousands of hearts seems ample proof that not all of us, victims of Puritan environment that we are, have been successfully impregnated with the worship of the false gods of materialism. With the help of the liberated Americans and the foreigners, there is yet hope. It is the English contributor to the foreign supplement of the book, Henry L. Stuart, who states the heresy that bars the way to freedom: "The American heart seems to go out to bulk, to scale, to efficiency. The American has neither the time nor the temperament to test and weigh... He is quite merciless to defeat."

But if the false gods are not tottering, perhaps books like this may help us to perceive that their feet are made of clay.

HARRY SALPETER.

MARK TURBYFILL

The Living Frieze, by Mark Turbyfill.
(Monroe Wheeler, Evanston, Ill.)

THE author of "The Living Frieze" opens his book with this promise:

Gatherer of shells,
Flower hunter,
Breather of slight winds—
There is much to surprise me.
I bring you songs for flutes,
And odd shaped leaves,
And pointed vagaries.

These trinkets you may toy,
And twine into your moods—
Carelessly.

Mr. Turbyfill seems to be interested primarily in those impressions which are generally termed aesthetic, and his poetry, as Mr. Llewellyn Jones has suggested, is perhaps more the poetry of art than of literature. He is keenly concerned with the beauty of the world, particularly as it affects himself. He is also deeply concerned with the intangible essence of outward forms. He seeks for the secrets of life and nature as they are hinted in a multitude of symbols.

He presents startling images but lacks in this first book the perfection of form in sound which would make those images persist. The verse is intellectually stimulating but, as poetry, generally unsatisfactory. One demands form, after all, in poetry, just as one demands it in marble. Mr. Turbyfill seems to have missed it or to have ignored it in too many instances.

There are pleasant lines and pleasant stanzas but Mr. Turbyfill at his best frequently works with a vagueness of touch that is marring. His cadences seem to lack that inner vitality which would make them beautiful and persistent in themselves. Too often he grows deliberately involved for some high purpose and arrives at a result, I am sure, quite different from that he intended.

He has adopted mannerisms from other poets, it seems, and particularly from Maxwell Bodenheim. These lines from "Wall Flower: Lawn Fete" are very much in Bodenheim's style:

She is touched perilously near to loneliness,
Near to breaking her thought
Into colored fragments of despair.

There are undeniably many stimulating conceptions in these poems. Many of them are, for one reason or another, delightful. Intellectually Mark Turbyfill has struck some brilliant sparks in his contracts with the world. See "Fragment of Vision":

The texture of your mind
And the flavor of your consciousness
Intact remain.
* * * *
After cloud-shapes vanish
Their imprint clings forever.
* * * *
Only the untouched forms of daisies
Resist translation to changing phases.

He frequently records things seen that are well worth seeing with him, noting "an unguessed beauty in dingy things" and how often in strange places "beauty flames into view."

In "Neglected Vase" he writes:

What unchanging consciousness
Sits dryly in your wan petals,
Daffodils?

Mark Turbyfill promises rich future performance. I quote "Sloth":

In the sun
A date palm sways
And one brown girl
Struts copiously,

O days!
Pass thus over me.

And "She Goes to Pisa, *To Mary Garden*":

She has rounded her shoulders
To the curve of his arm
And walked
With him slowly.

She has walked with him
Slowly:
Granite procession,
White gesture of stars.

Gesture already verges on jargon. Mr. Turbyfill uses it too often. But there is an excellent couplet in "Shapes"

In what fleet gestures
Have you found eternity?

There is admirable stuff either of idea, image, emotion or—much more rarely—cadence, in a number of the

other poems: "Choreographic Incident", "The Mind Plays with the Sea Storm," "Snow Scene: Puppet Booth," "Rain Night," "Intangible Symphony," "Benediction," "Journey," "Full Figure at Repose,' "A Young Dancer," and "The Forest of Dead Trees."

But there is deplorable stuff in a number, too. And if "Fertile Gesture," with lines like these among others

No unsatisfied green globe
Points puffy white dull mind
To sharpened phrase, to escape infinitive

is a good poem, I am a laughing goose.

Nevertheless, Mary Turbyfill promises, and not too vaguely, to enrich American poetry. Despite all its apparent defects, "The Living Frieze" is a first book that demands respect.

BELLEROPHON JONES.

She Sews

By HAROLD VINAL

She's always mending aprons or making bits of lace,
She hasn't time to look out at a passing face,
The lads of Camden are nothing to her—
Only the sound of needles or the wheel's whir.

She was born a dreamer but she never leaves her room,
She sweeps up the thread ends with a little broom,
And what she is thinking and what she knows
Is less than the sound of the wind when it blows.

She was born a gipsy but she never seeks the road,
Nor follows after pipers with a gipsy load,
Neither moon or water make her catch her breath,
Perhaps she knows that love is as hard as death.

She's always mending aprons or making bits of lace,
She hasn't time to look out at a passing face,
The lads of Camden are nothing to her—
Only the sound of needles or the wheel's whir.

Comment

EZRA POUND ON SANDBURG—SECESSION, A NEW MAGAZINE OF THE REFUGEES—PARIS NOTES BY ARTHUR MOSS—SOUTHERN POETRY

EZRA POUND writes from Paris, with particular reference to the article in THE DOUBLE DEALER for February entitled "The Literary Tough" (q. v.):

"Neither Sandburg's last book nor Professor Schelling's review of it has reached me. As an 'effete neo-European' may I be permitted to ask whether 'tough' is a term of insult?

"Sandburg was a lumber-jack, at least that was, I think, the term used in the first introduction of him. His ability was recognized both in Chicago and London about ten years ago. Let us for the sake of argument say that he is a 'tough':

A. In the language of the so indubitably refined brothers Goncourt: 'Are there prescribed classes in literature?'

B. If Sandburg still is a tough, whose fault is it?

"Sandburg has been known for ten years, there has been plenty of time for some University to offer him a fellowship, with leisure to browse in its library and 'polish' his language. But no, despite the anglo-olatry of many of our 'English Departments' fellowships are reserved for the docile mediocrity.

"Three forces in America decline to unite; the collegiate dog-in-the-manger; the outside impulse, and the 'literary' section of the press.

"Newspaper reviewers are, for some reason, chosen for their laxness and inaccuracy; the colleges, instead of trying to get hold of men of literary ability, men who could receive the knowledge (which is both an asset and an obstacle to good writing) insist that they should aim at the instruction of mediocrity, and *not* of the exceptional man.

"In other words, instead of trying to put their 'tradition' into the minds where it would be most fruitful, most apt to be fused with a living will, they *prefer* the passive incompetents. Thus the darkness is maintained.

"Was Carl offered an acquaintance with the classics; and did he refuse it?

"What are the facts? After Masters had declined to improve 'Spoon River'; after he had begun to get slack, and still more slack, Sandburg tried to present the small town, the Middle West, in harder language, to get his stroke cleaner, really to write better. There were all sorts of obstacles, notably the human obstacles, who wanted him to be the laureate of Chicago, to sing the 'BIG' songs. This colossus mania is not

limited to America; Mestrovic would have been an excellent sculptor if some Vienese hadn't told him to go an' be the Michael Angelo of Serbia.

"A man's admirers are not necessarily a help, when he is trying to form a style.

* * *

"On the other hand; when I was a student at the University of Pennsylvania, the English Department was still dubious about Whitman (that was 1905-07); you know what one is at twenty, one hears silly things and repeats 'em. The first time I was ever taken up for some flippancy about Whitman was by a German post grad, I think his name was Reithmuller. He flared round at me with: 'Fvwy, in Tdenmargk eeffen deh beasandts kkknow him.' I don't mean to imply that Whitman is the 'last word', *he* never thought he was. He only overcame the obstacles of the King James version, the Murkhn newspaper, and some sort of rehash of Hindoo authors in about thirty pages of his collected poems.

"I dare say those thirty pages will stand against the work of the Concord agglomerate.

"Now, naow I wonder does Carl mind bein' called 'tough'. Keats, as the cultured are never tired of reminding us, was a... but no... one shudders... but still the author of Endymion may 'ave dropped 'is haitches.

* * *

"On the other or third hand: Sandburg might write better, Whitman might have written better; the current prose and verse of America might be better written; a knowledge of the classics is an advantage if a man knows how to temper it with common sense, and if he don't think Shakespeare and Tacitus are the suitable 'models' for a XXth century writer.

"Toughness is not a mere matter of vocabulary. You will find 'mug' in the works of the late (pause)...Henry James. It is used not as a synonym for the Elizabethan word visage, but rather as a synonym for the vulgar term 'boko', (français *caboche*). The French, tête, being derived, according to some authorities, from the tough latin *testa,* a pot.) Point being that both the professors and the toughs (journalists) have something to learn from each other, neither of 'em has a monopoly on all there is to be known, but they are each convinced that they have. (Oh my grammar!)

"The professors, upon the one part, and the journalists on the other, for the one part, for the other, might with mutual benefit assemble, foregather, and knock with advantage the one off the other the chips, dust, and other residua; but they can't see the wood for the trees.

"Yaas, some place has giv' Frost a job, but he was a school-teacher before he escaped to England and got hisself publish'd. He ain't no tough, chimmey. And Mr. Eliot was born in St. Louis."

SECESSION, a new magazine of the refugees, is announced for early appearance at Vienna. Its announcement reads in part:

"*Secession,* instigated at Paris, opens fire this spring at Vienna, will march on Berlin, and eventually establish itself in New York. *Secession* is an organ for the youngest generation of American writers who are moving away from the main body of intelligent writing in the United States since 1910. They are defining a new position from which to assault the last decade and to launch the next. 'Form, simplification, strangeness, respect for literature as an art with traditions, abstractness...these are the catchwords that are repeated most often among the youngest writers.'—Malcolm Cowley.

"*Secession* aims to be the first gun for this youngest generation. It will publish stories, poems, criticism, insults and vituperation by Slater Brown, Kenneth Burke, Donald B. Clark, Malcolm Cowley, Hart Crane, E. E. Cummings, Matthew Josephson, Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, and by certain allied Frenchmen, Guillaume Apollinaire, Louis Aragon, Andrè Breton, Paul Eluard, Philipe Soupault and Tristan Tzara. It will, in its early numbers, expose the private correspondence, hidden sins and secret history of its American contemporaries, *The Dial, Little Review, Broom, Poetry,* et cetera. It already notes in current literature very much that demands hilarious comment."

The editor of *Secession* guarantees the sporadic existence of the magazine for two years, but appeals for subscribers and patrons. Those interested in becoming either are referred to Peter K. Hurwitz, Treasurer, 1361 46th Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

* * *

ARTHUR MOSS writes from Paris:

"One cannot sit in the Café de la Rotonde five minutes without being hailed by Americans of all varieties of the seven arts. Among the expatriates are Harold Stearns, editor of 'Civilization in the United States'; the sculptors, Paul Manship and Jo Davidson; Man Ray, whom the Zaraistas have named the American Dada; Sinclair Lewis, who for some curious and unexplained reason seems to prefer Boulevard Montparnasse to Main Street; Hiram K. Moderwell, author of 'The Theater of Today.' (Moderwell threatens to get back to work now that Kenneth Macgowan has brought out 'The Theatre of Tomorrow.') Joseph Kling, editor of *Pagan,* arrived recently.

"The Salon des Independants is the current exhibition at the Grand Palais. Outside of the sculpture of Jacques Lipchitz and the paintings of Matisse, Picasso, Gleizes, Lhôte, and a few others, there was nothing shown that was distinctly superior to the work of the Americans, Paul Burlin, Man Ray, Julian Levi, Waldo Pierce, Abel Warshavsky, Janet Scudder, and Morgan Russell.

"The French men of letters are going in heavily for American works at present. Sinclair Lewis' 'Main Street' is being translated into French by Simon de Vaulchier. The Paris literary reviews are continually printing critical estimates of American writers. They seem particularly interested in Waldo Frank, Carl Sandburg, Sherwood Anderson, and the other writers who present material so thoroughly local as to be unmistakably American from a French viewpoint.

"It is in the world of music, however, that we are really beginning to hold our own. Recently 'Libellule,' an operetta by a young American composer, Blair Fairchild, made a decided impression in Paris. It was given at the Opera Comique. The modern and important 'Groupe des Six,' Milhaud, Durey, Honneger, Taillefer, Auric and Poulenc, have been greatly influenced by American 'blues' which they insist on classifying, and I think rightly, as American folk-music. The pianist Jean Wiéner has been giving concerts devoted almost entirely to jazz. He says: 'Jazz is the only music, outside of Spanish popular dances, that has not passed under the deadening influence of institutes. It has not been codified. It is still fresh and hence, of great importance.' "

POETRY, a Magazine of Verse, has brought out a special number, devoted to work of poets living in the southeastern part of the United States. It contains interesting verse by a number of contributors, and an essay of considerable length by Hervey Allen and DuBose Heyward, who outline the renaissance of the art of poetry in the South.

Books Received

MARIA CHAPDELAINE, by Louis Hémon (*Macmillan.*)

A GATE OF CEDAR (poems), by Katherine Morse (*Macmillan.*)

MOTION PICTURES FOR COMMUNITY NEEDS, by Gladys and Henry Bollman (*Holt.*)

SAINT TERESA, by Henry Sydnor Harrison (*Houghton Mifflin.*)

THE VEIL AND OTHER POEMS, by Walter De La Mare (*Holt.*)

A SHROPSHIRE LAD, by A. E. Housman. Authorized edition (*Holt.*)

PATCHWORK, by Beverley Nicholls, (*Holt.*)

"YULETIDE AND YOU," with other Love Songs, by Henry E. Harman. (*Stone Publishing Co.*, Charlotte, N C.)

CHILDREN OF TRANSGRESSION, by G. Vere Tyler (*Holt.*)

NOTES ON LAND AND SEA, by Robert Frank Evans (*Badger.*)

PAINTED WINDOWS, Studies in Religious Personality, by a Gentleman with a Duster. With an introduction by Kirsopp Lake, illustrated by Emile Verpilleux (*G. P. Putnam's Sons.*)

And others reviewed in this issue.